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Original

DEPORTE, RESILIENCIA E INCLUSIÓN SOCIAL: CONSTRUCCIÓN DE UNA RÚBRICA DE EVALUACIÓN DESDE LA EXPERIENCIA

SPORT, RESILIENCE AND SOCIAL INCLUSION: DEVELOPING AN EVALUATION RUBRIC THROUGH EXPERIENCE

DEPORTE, RESILIÊNCIA E INCLUSÃO SOCIAL: CONSTRUÇÃO DE UMA RÚBRICA DE AVALIAÇÃO DESDE LA EXPERIENCIA

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VALIDACIÓN DE UNA RÚBRICA PARA EVALUAR LA RESILIENCIA DESDE EL DEPORTE EN CONTEXTOS DE VULNERABILIDAD SOCIAL

RESUMEN

Introducción: Debido a la ausencia de investigaciones e instrumentos que evalúan la resiliencia en una organización deportiva que trabaje en un contexto de riesgo social, se ha diseñado una rúbrica de evaluación sobre el fomento de la resiliencia en un contexto deportivo y de vulnerabilidad social. La promoción de la resiliencia a través del deporte para la inclusión social debe ser un proceso intencionado, lo que conlleva la necesidad de tener instrumentos para evaluar los efectos de dicho proceso. **Objetivo**: Lo que propone este artículo es la creación de un instrumento de esta índole, en forma de rúbrica. **Material y métodos:** Se realizó un estudio exploratorio con la metodología siguiente: 1) revisión documental de la bibliografía y materiales existentes para evaluar la resiliencia en un contexto de riesgo social y deportivo; 2) construcción del instrumento mediante una estructura tipo rúbrica; 3) revisión y mejora del instrumento por parte de un grupo de expertos; 4) validación de contenido mediante el juicio de expertos en el área; 5) aplicación del instrumento a un grupo piloto 6) mejora final del instrumento a partir de las sugerencias de las profesionales y su evaluación. **Resultados y discusión:** El resultado ha sido la construcción y validación de una rúbrica de evaluación con seis dimensiones y cuatro niveles de logro. Los análisis de validez y fiabilidad a través del juicio de expertos y análisis exploratorio factorial demuestran la utilidad del instrumento para valorar los efectos del deporte en la promoción de la resiliencia en contextos de vulnerabilidad social. **Conclusiones:** El instrumento presentado tiene un claro valor de aplicabilidad y responde a una necesidad de intervención comunitaria, pero debe tener en cuenta sus limitaciones, así como más investigación en evaluación de la resiliencia en dichos contextos para su replicabilidad de manera universal.

Palabras clave: resiliencia, deporte, diseño, instrumento rúbrica, inclusión social

VALIDATION OF A RUBRIC TO EVALUATE RESILIENCE THROUGH SPORT IN CONTEXTS OF SOCIAL VULNERABILITY

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Physical activity and sport are valuable resources for the promotion of social inclusion, especially in highly vulnerable groups such as young people. The engagement of youth in sport programmes promotes resilience. It facilitates the learning of life skills, fostering social bonds and affection, awareness of limits and the importance of challenging oneself as a way to achieve real expectations, while facilitating personal wellbeing through emotional strength. Promoting resilience through sport for social inclusion must be a deliberate process, requiring tools to assess the effects of the process. **Objective:** This article aims to create a rubric-based tool to assess the promotion of resilience in a sports environment with the goal of strengthening social inclusion. **Material and Methods:** It is based on the following methodology: 1) a review of existing works to assess resilience in a context of social and sports risk; 2) the creation of the tool in a rubric-based structure; 3) review and improvement of the instrument by a group of experts; 4) validation of the content by a group of experts in the field; 5) application the instrument in a pilot group; 6) final improvements to the instrument following suggestions from professionals and their evaluation. **Results and Discussion:** The result has been the construction and validation of a rubric composed of six dimensions and four levels of achievement. Validity and reliability analyses through expert judgement and exploratory factorial analysis demonstrate the instrument's usefulness for assessing the effects of sport in promoting resilience in contexts of social vulnerability. **Conclusions:** The instrument presented has clear applicability value and responds to a need for community intervention, but it must take into account its limitations as well as further research on resilience assessment in these contexts for its universal replicability. The instrument and the guidelines derived from its application are based on the Sport!Op! project (Opportunities for the inclusion of vulnerable young people through sport).

Keywords: resilience, sport, design, rubric instrument, social inclusion.

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INTRODUCTION

Sport, when practised in an intentional, community-based and well-designed socio-educational context, can be an ideal scenario to promote social inclusion (Ekholm and Dahlstedt, 2021; Eley and Kirk, 2002; Parker et al., 2019; Ríos, 2017; Riffi et al., 2023). When it is well-focused, it can have a positive influence on the autonomy, tolerance, achievement, enjoyment, moral conduct, socialisation, or other social values of the participants (Rapún-López et al., 2024). These assets are especially beneficial in groups who are at risk of social exclusion (Beni et al, 2017; European Comission, 2021). Therefore, social inclusion through sport goes beyond simply increasing the participation of vulnerable groups in collective spaces, it aims to improve well-being in their daily lives (Collins and Haudenhuyse, 2015). A special approach within this field is the promotion of resilience through sport, a fundamental objective of the Erasmus+ program "Opportunities for the inclusion of vulnerable youth through sport (Sport!Op!)", which frames the context for this study. It aims to identify the benefits of participating in sport as a tool to boost the resilience of young people who live in a situation of social risk.

The relevance of the study lies in the need for a tool that guides feedback for physical activity professionals working in contexts of social risk. Regarding this, feedback is understood as a means to drive pedagogical improvement and to guide sports organizations in incorporating resilience and educational content into their professional practices. To that end, an instrument designed with methodological and conceptual precision is proposed, one which can be used in physical activity and contexts of social risk to promote resilience.

Resilience models and social risk context

The study and conceptualisation of resilience has been approached from various disciplines, ranging from physics or molecular biology to sociological (Dramisino, 2007). This is perhaps the reason why it is difficult to find an unanimously accepted definition (Bretón et al., 2016), although there is some agreement in the personal qualities that enable individuals to navigate adversity (Connor and Davidson 2003), no matter the form it takes.

Likewise, there is no universal agreement in its origins. While some sources consider it a relatively stable individual characteristic, linked with personality and of a structural nature (Connor and Davidson, 2003; Wagnild and Young, 1990, in García Secades et al., 2014), others see it as a dynamic and contextual product of the interactions between individuals and their life contexts (Luthar and Cicchetti, 2000, in García Secades et al., 2014).

In contexts of social risk, the interplay between resilience and inclusion is understood through the lens of human development, grounded in people's virtues and strengths, rather than in the detection of problems, deficits and shortcomings. This involves teaching people how to coexist and how to develop as individuals but also providing emotional support so that everyday learning is grounded in reality; also conveying the importance of having realistic expectations and accepting personal limitations.

At the same time, it is necessary to learn how to be an active subject/agent in one's own process, and to take part in setting objectives, planning and decision making to create an educational community, enriching social circles (Henderson and Milstein, 2003). Melillo and Ojeda (2008) consider a resilient perspective can promote healthy and protective characteristics so that individuals are able to withstand the challenging conditions which they may find themselves in.

Likewise, in a context of social vulnerability, education means bringing together diverse perspectives to challenge deterministic views that predict a fatalistic future for certain adolescents and young people, one in which learning and growth are defined by stagnation, inevitability, and a fixed, insurmountable challenge from the beginning. (Llobet, 2009). Therefore, adopting a resilient attitude based on hope and confidence in the youngster is fundamental to break from this deterministic stigma.

Looking toward the end of the last century many authors such as Bernard (1999), Grotberg (1995), Kaplan (1999), Luthar and Cushing (1999), Masten (1999), Richardson et al. (1990), Rutter (1993), Ungar (2003) and, Wollin and Wollin (1993) were interested in the factors that helped to develop resilience in children and adolescents who had suffered adversity. They all agreed on the existence of one or more specific factors which enables children and young people from vulnerable family, institutional, or social environments to overcome the risks inherent in these

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environments and integrate successfully into society. Subsequently, Wolin and Wolin (1993) and Melillo (2008), after identifying the most common characteristics found in these children and adolescents, established the pillars of resilience. The model proposed by these researchers determines the qualities of resilient individuals through the creation of a model called resilience mandala in which the individual is placed at the centre, and from them emerge the different characteristics of resilience: Insight; Independence; Relationships; Initiative; Humour; Creativity; Morality; Self-Esteem.

Empirical evidence on resilience and sport

Although the relationship between sport and resilience has yet to be studied in a sufficiently broad and systematic way (Reche et al., 2016), there is research that addresses the topic. Following Chacón et al. as a starting point (2016), a sporting career can often entail negative situations that affect performance (fluctuations in results, injuries, relegation, personal issues), it is easy to establish a connection between sport and resilience.

In line with this, Bretón et al. (2016) state, after reviewing different studies, that a direct and positive link between high levels of resilience and sporting success can be ascertained. These same authors argue that resilience may explain how athletes overcome challenging situations in the development of sport careers, an attribute that stems from the high level of self-imposed pressure often associated with sporting practise (Valle, 2008). On top of that, Dramisino (2007) argues that an association between sport and the qualities from the pillars of resilience can be detected, such as initiative, optimism, interpersonal skills and creativity, among others. Thus, Pérez and Cabrera (2021) determine that sport activity is an important tool for enhancing human capabilities, including resilience, especially, among young people, as it enables them to overcome the potential adversities inherent in the path to adulthood (Trigueros, 2020).

At this point, it is necessary to highlight the mutual influence that sport practice and resilience exert on one another. As Chacón et al. (2016) suggest, they can be considered as an inseparable pair. These authors state that sport in itself may turn into an ideal setting for building resilience.

In a similar and complementary vein, Fletcher and Sarkar (2012) and Gumilar et al. (2025) argue that not only are the effects of sport practice on resilience positive in everyday life (promoting social and emotional development as well as life skills) but also that stressful circumstances experienced in life (such as family, health or psychological issues) can generate benefits that are transferable to the sporting context. Moreover, as Romero (2015) highlights, participation in intense sporting activity, common in sports practice, fosters the development of resilience.

Reche et al. (2016) states that a positive attitude, one brimming with optimism and self-confidence, makes individuals more receptive to the development of resilience and life skills (Gumilar et al., 2025) through sports activity, and at the same time reduces anxiety and helps prevent burnout among adults. For this reason, the creation of positive and encouraging training and competitive environments is recommended, and the important role of coaches is emphasised (Bretón et al., 2016).

Everything discussed so far has led to the repeated inclusion of sporting activities in programmes aimed at promoting social inclusion. This is evident, for example, in the narrative review by Monteiro et al. (2023), in which the authors explore the concepts of body image, trauma, and resilience through studies on sports-based social programmes. In the mentioned review, it is stated that sports-based social programmes contribute to promoting "an environment of freedom and trust, but, above all, responsibility in order to contribute to the development of resilience" (p. 10).

On the one hand, there are numerous studies which specifically stress resilience through sport to facilitate social inclusion. When reviewing these studies, it is possible to identify different groups they are aimed at. Likewise, it is possible to verify the importance attributed to the different pillars of resilience.

According to the target groups, the studies can be grouped based on whether they are aimed at: a) young people in general and their development (Koh et al., 2017; Riffi et al., 2021; Sanches, 2007); b) contexts of socio-economic vulnerability and adversity (Allen et al., 2006; Cortés et al., 2018, Norris and Norris, 2021); c) social and humanitarian crisis (Henle et al., 2007), for example, war (Abonga and Brown, 2002) or

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refugees (Pittaway et al., 2021); d) multiculturism and immigration (Johns et al. 2014); and e) penitentiary facilities (Morgan et al., 2020).

Just as mentioned at the beginning of this introduction, merely participating in sporting activity does not automatically deliver benefits related to resilience and/or social inclusion. Instead, it is essential that the activity has certain characteristics that allow it to reach its educational potential. With the aim of accurately determining these characteristics, the aforementioned instrument was created.

Benefits that justify the use of rubrics as an evaluation instrument

The rubric, as an evaluation instrument, helps overcome the challenge of objectively and reliably assessing content that is open-ended, creative or research based. It helps define shared criteria for making an accurate judgement of the evidence presented, which is the purpose of designing and using an evaluation rubric (García-Valcaver et al., 2020; Velasco and Tojar, 2018).

Rubrics, just as García (2014) states, are made up of a series of criteria which define the quality and the level of achievement of the evaluation instrument, making it possible to determine the quality and quantity of the learning (García-Valcaver et al., 2020).

The scientific literature endorses the rubric as an evaluation instrument with huge potential (Cano, 2015; Cebrián, 2007; GarcíaSanz, 2014; Ling, 2024; Mertler, 2000; Rochelle et al., 2012; and Velasco and Tójar, 2018), the highlights of which include:

- The possibility of reflecting on the results obtained through rubrics highlights their formative value, making it a key feature of their use. It also helps determine the extent to which certain objectives are being met and which ones require greater focus

- The value of constructing and using it collaboratively with various stakeholders lies in selecting indicators that truly reflect whether the intended outcomes are being achieved. As Cano (2015) notes, this collaborative process encourages the instrument's creators to adopt it as their own and view it as a reference point for improving performance in a specific task or subject

- The potential of the rubric to stimulate deep, high-quality learning, as they make what is expected clear.

Furthermore, there is strong evidence of the convenience of using specific measurement instruments in contexts of social vulnerability (O'Donell et al., 2022; United Nations, 2022) and of designing, validating and applying rubrics and other instruments in the measurement of resilience (Akbari et al., 2024; Oprins et al., 2024; Ramírez-Ucles et al., 2025).

METHODS

The main objective of the study is to validate a rubric for evaluating sport as a strategy for promoting resilience in a context of social vulnerability. This overall objective is broken down into two specific objectives:

- To construct a rubric, with a design phase, pilot testing and validation, to measure the benefits of sport regarding a strategy to promote resilience in community-based sporting contexts and from an educational approach.

-To show the potential of physical activity in a context of social vulnerability and how to promote resilience, in terms of life skills.

To meet the objectives of the study, mixed methodology was adopted (qualitative and quantitative) completed in the following steps: 1) documentary review of existing published works and materials to investigate or evaluate resilience; and construction of the instrument in a rubric-based structure with an educational perspective; 2) validation of the rubric, firstly, reviewing its content validity, improving the instrument through comparison with the input of 16 sports professionals who worked from an educational perspective with young people in situations of vulnerability; and, secondly, to examine the construct validity and reliability through the application by 55 sports professionals to a sample of 133 young people, and finally, 3) a final validation of the instrument to demonstrate the potential of physical activity in contexts of vulnerability.

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In the construction phase of the instrument, the results of the documentary review were taken into account, along with the key pillars of resilience when applied within the context of a sports organisation. The first version of the instrument underwent validation of the content and construct with experts who offered their contributions to improve it, focusing as much on its clarity and relevance as in its efficacy and efficiency. Clarity indicates how clear the meaning of the statement is, for example, whether a statement is unequivocal and only has one possible interpretation. Further details will be found in the following sections. In the pilot phase, the instrument was administered online through the Sport!Op! project's web platform, where data could be automatically downloaded into the statistical program used for analysis (SPSS). Administering and collecting the data was carried out between November and December 2022, and each person took between 15 and 20 minutes to respond to the rubric individually. All the contributions derived from the pilot testing were included in the final phase of the instrument validation.

The sample is two-fold. On the one hand, a first subgroup of 16 sports professionals that participated in one of the European Sport!OP! project meetings *(sample 1)*, the framework of this rubric. Of this first group, there were 8 men and 8 women. The origin of the participants was divided between the different project partners: 5 from Zagreb, 3 from Sarajevo, 2 from Grigny, 2 from Brussels, 2 from Granollers, 1 from Sweden and 1 from the University of Barcelona. On the other hand, there were 55 sports professionals from the different countries that make up the project and who lead sporting activities in those cities *(sample 2)*. Of these, 32 are men and 23 are women, with a consolidated professional background (more than 5 years) working with young people at social risk through sports projects. This second sample applied the rubric and collected the information from 133 young people that practised some physical activity. The sociodemographic profile of the young people who have been evaluated using the rubric is as follows: the average age of this group is 9 years old, with the vast majority between 7 and 10 years old. 40% of the young people are from Granollers, 31.9% from Zagreb, 21.5% from Lund, 5.9% from Ieper and only one person from Zagreb. About 60% do other extracurricular activities besides participating in the project, while 40% don't. Most of them live with their families. Their parents' educational level is mainly primary education (67.4%), and 28.9% have university level education. In the case of their mothers' educational level, 59.7% have primary education. Moreover, throughout the investigation, participation was voluntary, consensual and aimed to maintain a balanced sample of both sexes. To comply with the ethical protocol of the investigation (University of Barcelona, Code of Research Integrity, 2020), participants were informed about data confidentiality. The anonymity of the data collected has been guaranteed at all times, with special attention paid to data concerning young people. All data has been collected exclusively for the purpose of analysing resilience through sport and for statistical purposes only.

Data analysis

The data processing was carried out with the statistical analysis program IBM SPSS© v.27 for Windows. Initially, the univariate and bivariate analyses allowed for familiarisation with the data obtained and provided a first snapshot of the results, which are revisited in phase 4. Subsequently, the construct validity was analysed using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) on 133 participants registered by 55 professionals (*sample 2*), applying the principal component method and Varimax rotation. The reliability analysis was conducted by calculating Cronbach's Alpha for all items of the rubric at two points in time: before and after the activity. In this regard, the analysis is considered exploratory, as it is not possible to verify that the sample is representative in terms of confidence level and sampling error (the total population of young participants in the various sports activities across the cities included in the project is unknown). Likewise, no probabilistic sampling based on random criteria was carried out; instead, the questionnaire was completed by individuals who wished to participate and who were affiliated with Sport!Op!. The responses of 133 young people are considered to be sufficient to provide relevant evidence for this pilot study.

RESULTS

We present the results organised in three areas, according to the different phases of the study: a) Documentary review and construction of the rubric; b) Content validity, construct validity, and reliability; c) Pilot study group.

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Documentary review and rubric construction

The documentary review determined a structure of six pillars as a base to evaluate resilience: 1) Introspection: the observation of our thoughts, emotions and actions, leading to a clearer understanding of who we are and improving our decision-making ability by recognising our aptitudes and limitations; 2) Independence: the ability to establish limits between ourselves and our environment, which refers to the ability to maintain physical and emotional distance without being isolated; 3) Relationships/Socialisation: the ability to establish intimate and satisfactory bonds with other peoples, developing the trait of empathy or social skills; 4) Initiative: the ability to push and test oneself in progressively demanding tasks, developing the ability to deal with problems and exert control over them; 5) Humour and creativity: the ability to find humour in tragedy to help overcome obstacles and problems, and to create order, beauty and meaning out of chaos and disorder; and 6) Self-Esteem forms the foundation of the other pillars described and is the result of emotional self-care, which enables one to face life's challenges and to see oneself as deserving of happiness and respect.

These six items constitute the dimensions of the rubrics. Each of the dimensions is made up of 4 achievement levels from the Likert scale: «Not achieved», «Low achieved», «Practically achieved» and «Mostly achieved».

Once the dimensions to be studied and the levels of the quality scale were identified, and the type of evidence to be collected was defined (Hernández et al., 2015), the items were drafted with attention to using language appropriate for the target population. In this way, an instrument is proposed that is designed with a high level of methodological and conceptual precision, and which can be used in sports contexts with the aim of promoting resilience.

Moreover, with the idea of facilitating the evaluation of individual progress in the six key dimensions of resilience (introspection, independence, socialisation, initiative, humour and creativity and self-esteem), the rubric includes some elements aimed at bringing about a constructive and meaningful dialogue between the evaluators and participants.

In other words, the instrument is designed for use with a retrospective pre-post approach, enabling professional teams to assess young people's behaviours and skills before and after the sports intervention, and to clearly identify changes through defined levels of attainment. In addition, it also includes guidelines to promote self-perception and encourage reflective conversations with participants. These guidelines are presented as "Things you can observe" and "Elements that could be discussed with the children" (see figure 1). The rubric therefore has a clear qualitative component with the aim of guiding the assessment of each dimension and understanding each point on the Likert scale.

These guidelines provide concrete instructions on observable aspects of young people's behaviour, as well as specific questions that can help bring out relevant elements during the evaluation process. For example, in the socialisation dimension, the evaluator is encouraged to observe and discuss how the participant manages basic skills such as listening, greeting, saying goodbye, expressing gratitude or apologising. The evaluator is also prompted to explore the participant's development in social interaction, from group integration to cooperation and conflict resolution.

Each dimension also includes explicit suggestions of topics that may be brought into the conversation with the participant, such as preferences in play styles, perceptions of leadership, cooperation or conflict, and the recognition of their own emotions and social skills. Including these prompts helps ensure that the evaluation process goes beyond a simple numeric rating, creating a meaningful space for dialogue that encourages self-assessment and greater awareness of one's abilities and areas for growth.

Building on this conceptual and methodological development, the following table offers a synthetic overview of the six key dimensions of resilience that structure the rubric (introspection, autonomy/independence, socialisation, initiative, creativity – including humour – and self-esteem). For each pillar, it summarises what is being assessed, the main observable indicators in the sports context and the typical profiles associated with different levels of achievement.

For practical reasons, the original four Likert levels ("Not achieved", "Low achieved", "Practically

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achieved", "Mostly achieved") are grouped here into three broader bands: low (1–3), medium (4–7) and high (8–10). The intention is not to replace the full rubric, but to provide professionals with a concise reference that links behavioural observation and reflective dialogue with participants, and thus supports both evaluation and the promotion of resilience through sport. The annex document contains details of each dimension of the rubric and the format in which it was distributed for its implementation.

TABLE 1. Summary table of the 6 rubric dimensions

Dimension / Skill	Brief definition	Key observable indicators	Low level (1–3)	Medium level (4–7)	High level (8–10)
Socialization	Capacity to relate to peers and adults in the sports context, to take part in the group and to build cooperative and healthy relationships.	Avoids spaces of interaction and tends to isolate themselves. Has difficulty greeting, saying goodbye, expressing thanks or apologising. Has few friendships or social contacts within the activity. Plays a very passive or almost invisible role in the group, especially at the beginning of the session. Shows changes over time in their attitude towards group activities.	Does not recognise the benefits of maintaining cooperative relationships; avoids social spaces and tends to isolate, especially when things go wrong (fatigue, defeat); shows little interest in cooperative or team-based activities.	Shows interest in taking part in the group but constantly needs support from another person to integrate, maintain attention and stay motivated; mainly relates to a small, familiar group; finds it difficult to build meaningful bonds by themselves.	Takes part spontaneously in sessions, is integrated into the group and adapts to the context even when tired or when results are poor; seeks out others and shows interest in them, builds healthy bonds and accepts the presence of adults, whether they win or lose.
Autonomy	Capacity to act independently and take on responsibilities that are appropriate for their age within sports practice, including the possibility of sustaining autonomous participation in the long term.	Understands (or not) the rules of the game and the difference between simply obeying and really understanding them. Needs adult supervision for simple tasks. Ability to adapt to changes and look for solutions. Signs of independent behaviour when taking on tasks in the activity. Brings in their own proposals or initiatives during training.	Shows a level of independence clearly below what would be expected for their age; almost always depends on an adult in order to organise themselves and take part; confuses their own interests with those of the group; it is difficult to imagine a long-term autonomous sports participation.	Shows an age-appropriate degree of independence but needs the frequent presence of an adult to maintain it, especially when things do not go as expected; shows variable autonomy depending on the moment (training/competition); requires supervision to fulfil their responsibilities.	Shows an age-appropriate level of independence and the capacity to sustain a long-term autonomous sports practice; takes on responsibilities naturally and picks up tasks before the coach asks, without compromising the interests of the group, even when tired or when results are negative.
Creativity	Capacity to generate new ideas or original solutions in sports practice, to understand the purpose of training and to use different types of	Proposes (or not) new ideas for games, warm-ups, etc. Asks (or not) questions about what is being done and why. Uses (or not) feedback to adjust their performance. Introduces fun or	Simply follows instructions with no curiosity about the purpose of the training; does not offer new ideas or ask questions; does not reflect on tactics or strategy; does not	Understands the basic purpose of activities and asks some questions, but rarely proposes new ideas; even though they show some curiosity, they hardly ever use criticism or feedback	Assesses the quality of ideas and selects the best ones to turn into new routines; interprets training and competition results from different perspectives; clearly

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Dimension / Skill	Brief definition	Key observable indicators	Low level (1–3)	Medium level (4–7)	High level (8–10)
	information to improve (including the use of humour to cope with difficulties).	different elements when interacting with others. Promotes creative perspectives in discussions about the activity.	use feedback to review what they do.	to change how they train or play.	understands the purpose of training and looks for varied sources (experts, community, online resources, etc.) to innovate in their practice.
Introspection	Capacity to become aware of their own strengths and weaknesses, and to recognise and express emotions and motivations related to sport, using that awareness to self-regulate and make decisions.	Ability (or difficulty) to name what they feel and think. Recognition of strengths and areas for improvement in their play. Emotional reaction to fatigue, defeat or mistakes. Listening to and accepting feedback from coaches and peers. Ability to ask for help and express needs.	Shows no awareness of their sporting strengths and weaknesses; has great difficulty expressing thoughts, emotions and motivations; this lack of self-knowledge makes it hard to regulate emotions and exercise self-control, especially when tired or facing defeat.	Perceives their strengths and weaknesses but finds it hard to turn this into decisions that improve performance; needs someone else to speak for them in order to express emotions or motivations; struggles to genuinely interpret what went well or badly and what should be improved after training or competition.	Shows a high level of self-awareness appropriate to their age: knows when they are trying to do too much, recognises how their emotions affect others (and the other way round), spontaneously expresses what they feel and need, sets boundaries and can talk clearly about their fears or worries.
Initiative	Capacity to make decisions, set challenges, act without being told to, maintain effort towards personal goals and contribute actively to the group within sports practice.	Persistence when faced with difficulty or tiredness. Expression of their own opinions and points of view. Ability to set goals and plan how to achieve them. Performs tasks without being constantly told. Degree of intrinsic motivation and pride in the team.	Has great difficulty being patient and persevering; does not voice their opinion inside or outside the group; is easily influenced and takes on the group's interests as their own, without questioning or trying to push themselves.	Shows willingness to take on new challenges but constantly needs support from another person to carry them through; expresses personal interests but finds it hard to sustain them; almost always seeks the backing of an adult and rarely disagrees or maintains their own position.	Thinks for themselves and acts when necessary, even when tired or when results are poor; shows intrinsic motivation (does sport for enjoyment and for the challenge) and pride in their team; tends to be supportive, puts others before themselves and contributes actively to how the group functions.
Self-esteem	The way the child perceives and values themselves in the sports context: confidence, recognition of their capabilities	How they talk about themselves (positive/negative, realistic or not). Reaction to poor results, mistakes or injuries. Importance attached to other	Struggles to say positive things about themselves and rejects other people's recognition; has serious difficulties managing discomfort (poor	Their self-image is mostly negative and there is a gap between who they are and who they think they are; needs another person in order to overcome frustration after	Can say positive things about themselves (and about the team) regardless of results; shows optimistic thinking and tends to use

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Dimension / Skill	Brief definition	Key observable indicators	Low level (1–3)	Medium level (4–7)	High level (8–10)
	and limits, and ability to cope with results, mistakes and difficulties.	people's opinions (image, appearance, etc.). Acceptance or rejection of external recognition. Ability to identify positive aspects and areas for improvement.	results, injuries, mistakes) and becomes stuck; their discourse about themselves is unrealistic and very pessimistic ("I can't", "nothing ever changes").	mistakes or poor results; frequently seeks external validation; recognises some things they do well but finds it hard to accept their difficulties and suggestions for improvement.	constructive self-talk; recognises both what they do well and what they do not, and from there identifies aspects of themselves they want to improve.

Content validity, construct validity, and reliability

The appropriateness and relevance of the included aspects in the instrument were determined by means of a sub-sample of 16 experts from different countries, in an instrument validation process. The subgroup not only qualified the measurements and definitions of the different dimensions but also the format of the rubric.

Regarding the reliability of the instrument, Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the items, based on the average inter-item correlations. This analysis was conducted at two points: before the activity began and after it was completed. For the pre-project scale, Cronbach's Alpha was 0.925, indicating a high level of internal consistency and suggesting that the dimensions are strongly correlated and measure the same construct. The corrected item-total correlation showed no zero or negative values, so it was not necessary to remove any dimension from the scale. During or after the project, Cronbach's Alpha decreased slightly to 0.875 but still reflected good internal consistency. Once again, the corrected item-total correlation remained relatively high, and the removal of any dimension was not recommended.

TABLE 2. Cronbach's Alpha (begin and after the activity)

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
Beginning of the activity	0.925	6
After activity	0.875	6

Regarding construct validity, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was applied as a statistical technique to more precisely explore the underlying dimensions, constructs, and latent content of the observed variables. The principal component method and Varimax rotation were applied to improve the interpretation of the factors. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO = 0.914) test and Bartlett's test of sphericity (χ^2 = 552.814, df = 15; $p < 0.000$) confirm that the data are suitable for the proposed factor analysis. The total variance explained by this single factor exceeds the minimum threshold of 60%, reaching 72.86%.

The analysis of the factor matrix indicates that all items in the rubric are represented by a single factor, with significant factor loadings, most of them approximately above 0.8. The results revealed that only one factor has an eigenvalue greater than 1 (eigenvalue = 4.371), accounting for 72.86% of the total variance. The scree plot showed a clear inflection after the first factor, supporting a one-factor solution. The communalities are high, which implies that all variables are well represented in the factor space. Introspection is the least explained variable by the factor, with a communality of 64.8%. Overall, the factor analysis reveals a good fit for the resulting model. These findings suggest that the rubric is unidimensional and measures a single global construct, which aligns with the theoretical framework of resilience as an integrated competency.

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TABLE 3. Component Matrix

	Begin	After
	Component 1	**Component 1**
Autonomy	0.882	0.878
Initiative	0.866	0.831
Socialization	0.866	0.823
Creativity	0.855	0.800
Self-esteem	0.846	0.712
Introspection	0.805	0.662

The same procedure was repeated for the items at the time the activity was carried out. The results are quite similar to those of the previous analysis. After the activity, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO = 0.881) test and Bartlett's test of sphericity ($\chi^2 = 377.255$, df = 15; $p < 0.000$) confirm that the data are suitable for the proposed factor analysis. In this model, results shown that only one factor has an eigenvalue greater than 1 (eigenvalue = 3.724) and the total variance explained by this single factor accounts for 62.062%. All items in the rubric are well represented by this single factor, with relevant factor loadings (ranging from 0.6 to 0.88), demonstrating high internal consistency. Only items related to socialization and creativity were less well represented, with communalities of 71.2% and 66.2%, respectively.

The expert review (judgmental review) carried out through a more qualitative approach established clear and understandable dimensions. The experts agreed that these dimensions encompass the full concept of resilience in the context of socially vulnerable young people. The levels of the rubric are consistent and progressive. These conclusions are corroborated by the results obtained from a more quantitative perspective: Cronbach's alpha is high, demonstrating internal consistency. Exploratory factor analysis further reinforces this one-dimensional nature of resilience with one eigenvalue greater than 1 and very high factor loadings, pointing to high internal consistency.

Thus, even if the factor analysis suggests one dominant factor, the qualitative work with experts confirmed that each dimension captures specific behavioural patterns that are useful for intervention and dialogue with young people. Therefore, we keep the six dimensions for formative and interpretative purposes, while the factor analysis supports the existence of a coherent overall resilience construct.

Pilot testing

To demonstrate the potential of physical activity in a context of social vulnerability and as a final validation of the instrument, the tool was tested in a sample of 133 young people (the final phase of the process). The results of the rubric and the influence of the Sport!Op! project on the participating young women are presented in a concise manner. The following chart compares the results obtained at the initial stage of the project and at the current moment of data collection—when the project is either in full implementation or already completed. The box plot allows for a visual representation of where 50% of the participants are located (the box), as well as the distribution of the results that deviate from or align with this central trend (the whiskers), and it even highlights extreme cases that are significantly distant from the main distribution where the central 50% of cases fall (extremes and outliers).

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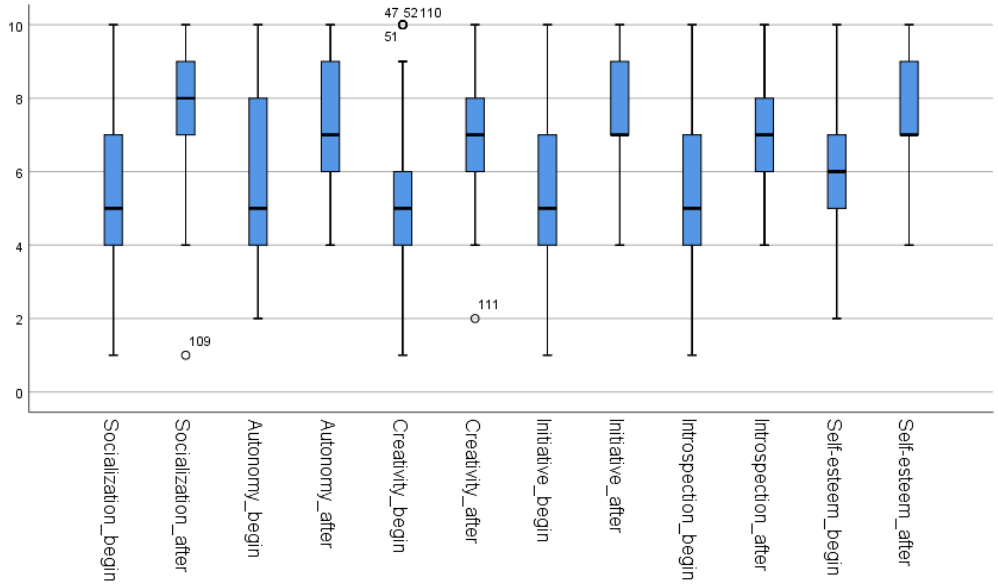
FIGURE 1. Resilience Dimensions Boxplot



The results demonstrate the following findings: a) in all the assessed dimensions, there is an improvement from the beginning of the activity to the end; b) with the exception of self-esteem, the rest of the dimensions, at least 50% of the participants selected between 4 to 6, and even, in the case of autonomy, 7 or 8; c) c) The heterogeneity of the responses can be observed both in the width of the box (the wider it is, the greater the variability in responses) and in the whiskers (which represent the 25% of cases below and above the box, not considered extreme values). This variability is particularly evident in the dimensions of socialization and autonomy, as well as in initiative and introspection. Shifting the focus to what happens once the project is implemented, we observe that, in addition to the improved scores noted previously, the box is positioned at high or above-average levels, even reaching a score of 9 in the case of initiative and self-esteem. There is also greater homogeneity in the results, as indicated by the smaller size of the boxes. Therefore, there is greater agreement among these scores regarding the effects of the project. Finally, it is worth highlighting the distinct results for the creativity dimension. At the initial stage, this was the dimension where young participants received the lowest ratings, ranging between 4 and 6 points on a scale from 1 to 10. It can also be observed that the sports professionals showed a very consistent pattern in their evaluations. Some professionals did identify a few young people with high creativity scores at the beginning of the project, but these were considered outliers, as they deviated significantly from the dominant trend, which was between 4 and 6 points. When analyzing the effect of the Sport!Op! project, we see that creativity has also improved, with half of the cases now falling between 6 and 8 points. The ratings continue to be very consistent—especially when compared to the initial creativity scores.

To complete the analysis between the pre- and post-tests of the different dimensions of the rubric, a paired sample t-test is applied for each dimension.

The mean differences range from -1.5 points to -2.0 points. Differences between the beginning and after are statistically significant in all dimensions of the rubric; therefore, the initial and subsequent means differ. To analyse whether these differences are large or small, Cohen's D effect size has been calculated. The effect sizes thus obtained are greater than 0.8, ranging from -0.96 to -1.26, demonstrating a large effect. Furthermore, the negative sign shows that the dimensions at the initial moment have a lower mean than at the final moment (see Table 4).

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TABLE 4. Paired Sample t-test of Resilience dimensions

				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Cohen's d
Socialization	-2.045	1.618	0.140	-2.323	-1.768	-14.573	132	0.000	-1.264
Autonomy	-1.647	1.447	0.125	-1.895	-1.398	-13.123	132	0.000	-1.138
Creativity	-1.692	1.349	0.117	-1.923	-1.460	-14.458	132	0.000	-1.254
Introspection	-1.624	1.352	0.117	-1.856	-1.392	-13.856	132	0.000	-1.201
Initiative	-1.797	1.521	0.132	-2.058	-1.536	-13.622	132	0.000	-1.181
Self-esteem	-1.549	1.617	0.140	-1.826	-1.272	-11.050	132	0.000	-0.958

The project appears to contribute to improvements in the dimensions of resilience. But how much influence does the project have? Professionals rated its impact on a scale from 1 to 4 (from "low influence" to "significant influence"). Self-esteem is the dimension where professionals reported the greatest influence of the Sport!Op! project, followed by socialisation, with average scores close to 3. On top of that, their opinions were the most consistent across all assessed dimensions, indicating high level of agreement.

The following table shows the influence of the project according to the participation levels of the group of young people. Greater attendance at the sessions also corresponds to a greater influence of the sport project across all dimensions. Moreover, there are not many differences between those who complement their participation in the sport project with other extracurricular activities.

TABLE 5. Influence of the SportOp! project in the dimensions of resilience (1, no influence 4 high influence) according to the participation levels of the participants of the SportOp! project

	Improvement socialization	Improvement autonomy	Improvement creativity	Improvement introspection	Improvement initiative	Improvement self-esteem
Number sessions attended						
Less than 20% of the pilot sessions	2.78	2.56	2.33	2.56	2.89	3.00
Between 20% and 60% of the pilot session	3.07	2.68	2.98	2.68	2.98	3.19
More than 60% of the pilot sessions	2.90	2.91	2.67	2.75	2.82	2.79
Participant joins any other after-school activities apart from the SportOp! pilot?						
No	3.02	2.85	2.72	2.76	2.91	2.94
Yes	2.93	2.75	2.82	2.67	2.89	3.00
Total	***2.96***	***2.79***	***2.78***	***2.71***	***2.89***	***2.98***

DISCUSSION

While there is broad consensus on the potential of sport as a positive setting for social inclusion (Ekholm and Dahlstedt, 2021; Eley and Kirk, 2002; Parker et al., 2019; Ríos, 2017; Riffi et al., 2023), this potential is only fully realized when sports practice is guided by an explicitly socio-educational intention. In this regard, it is essential that coaches have tools that enable them to assess the extent to which the sporting environments they create bolster self-confidence and strengthen the resilience of participants (Bretón et al., 2016; Reche et al., 2016), especially in contexts

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marked by adversity and social exclusion (Allen et al., 2006; Henle et al., 2007; Johns et al., 2014; Cortés et al., 2018; Morgan et al., 2020; Norris and Norris, 2021).

Within this framework, the developed rubric serves as a strategic tool for professional teams, as it allows them to gather and interpret information on the effects of the intervention program and to assess whether conditions are being created that foster an environment based on freedom, responsibility, and trust (Monteiro et al., 2023). The construction of the rubric has also been a shared exercise in reflection involving coordinators, coaches with direct experience in practice, and academic experts in sport, inclusion, and resilience. This interdisciplinary collaboration has given the instrument a dialogical and reflective character, making it a valuable tool for both feedback and guidance for sports leaders and intervention professionals. As Lazcano et al. (2022) emphasize, this approach is particularly relevant in the field of inclusive sport, and Vedung (2017) highlights the importance of applying practical methods adapted to specific contexts to achieve meaningful results. For their part, Marcén et al. (2025) add the importance of combining inclusive strategies, mentioning the need to combine awareness-raising, specific training and adapted sports environments to maximise the physical, cognitive and emotional benefits of sport as an inclusive tool.

Likewise, the literature acknowledges the value of rubrics as tools for building consensus around change objectives among the different actors involved, for example, between technical staff and young participants, which facilitates the convergence of cognitive perspectives and clarifying evaluation criteria and scales (García-Valcárcel et al., 2020; Velasco and Tojar, 2018). In the rubric presented here, this principle has been carefully integrated: it not only provides clear guidance on the aspects to be observed, but also includes prompts and suggestions designed to stimulate dialogue and the co-construction of meaning with participants.

Furthermore, one of the main challenges lies in ensuring that the evaluation instruments used are valid, reliable, and practical for measuring the acquisition of life skills. Nevertheless, such instruments are essential for providing sports professionals with clear criteria and associated scales, enabling them to assess their work precisely and efficiently, and to support their capacity for transformation (Martens, 2018).

The rubric analysed here meets these requirements, as it includes specific, contextualised guidelines that support both observation and evaluation. By using defined descriptors that highlight varying levels of achievement, the rubric encourages a more objective assessment of complex or subjective areas (Muñiz, 2019), while also aligning expectations with actual outcomes (Gairín, 2009). In line with this, the items related to resilience are clearly formulated and directly linked to observable behaviours in practical settings. Regarding the evaluation methodology, it is important to note that three recommendations from Shaikh et al. (2020) were followed: the evaluation was conducted in groups, the programme was assessed from a contextualised perspective, and the opinions of participants were considered. In addition, following Gozzoli et al. (2013), diverse perspectives were included in the process. However, it should be acknowledged that greater direct engagement with participants and beneficiaries would have been beneficial.

From a psychometric point of view, the high internal consistency ($\alpha > .875$ at the beginning; and $\alpha > .925$ after) and the one-factor solution indicate that the rubric behaves as a homogeneous measure of resilience in the sports context. At the same time, the six theoretically grounded dimensions and the qualitative validation with practitioners support their usefulness as analytic categories for feedback and programme design. In this sense, the instrument combines a global resilience score (supported by the factor analysis) with six formative sub-dimensions (supported by theory and expert judgement). We consider this combination appropriate for an evaluative rubric whose main goal is to monitor change and to promote reflective dialogue, rather than to estimate six independent latent traits (Huerzeler et al., 2025).

CONCLUSIONS

It is evident that rubrics are useful tools for assessing the quality and impact of projects, beyond their traditional use in the educational field (Gozzoli et al., 2013). It is therefore not far-fetched to affirm that their application in socio-educational intervention contexts, such as the one characterising this research, is not only

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viable but highly relevant. So, the rubric presented represents a significant contribution both to the scientific community and to the technical environments of social sport, offering a concrete means of incorporating resilient and educational content into actions aimed toward young people at risk.

The study offers a relevant, practical, and innovative contribution by constructing a specific rubric for sports intervention in vulnerable contexts. However, it should also be noted that the study is exploratory in nature and its validation is still in its early stages. Therefore, more extensive studies are needed to confirm the structure of the instrument, study its reliability in other settings, explore its stability in other populations, and evaluate its impact on the quality of the intervention.

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