

Article

Self-Esteem and Resilience in Adolescence: Differences between Bystander Roles and Their Implications in School Violence in Spain

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Abstract: School violence is a social problem that has an impact on the psychological well-being of adolescents. One of the least identified roles within school violence is that of bystander, which refers to students who witness acts of violence perpetrated by their peers in the school environment. Current scientific evidence determines that young people with high self-esteem and resilience tend to have better mental health. The aim of this research is to identify the role of being a bystander of school violence on self-esteem and resilience in this crucial developmental stage of adolescence. The sample is composed of a total of 730 adolescents aged between 14 and 19 years. The results obtained indicate that young people who perceive themselves as non-bystanders of school violence show higher levels of self-esteem. As for the differences according to sex, it was found that non-bystander boys have greater resilience and self-esteem compared to girls. There are negative correlations between a healthy lifestyle and stress, but positive correlations between healthy lifestyle and self-esteem. In addition, we wanted to investigate the likelihood that observant adolescents intervene to help their peers. The results show that resilience acts as a protective factor that encourages such intervention, while self-esteem would be a risk factor. These findings highlight the importance of promoting resilience and self-esteem in school settings to improve peer relationships and foster healthy youth development.

Keywords: healthy lifestyle; stress; self-esteem; school violence; adolescence



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1. Introduction

The presence of violence in the school environment has been of growing concern in contemporary society, as its significant impact on the socioemotional development of adolescents has been recognized [1]. This complex phenomenon encompasses a variety of aggressive behaviors, such as physical, verbal or psychological aggression among students, and has been the subject of an extensive body of research [2].

The definition of school violence is moving toward a more social-ecological approach that focuses not only on the characteristics of victims, aggressors, and bystanders, but also encompasses the context and society at large [3]. Several studies have addressed the definition and characteristics of school violence, highlighting its negative impact on students' mental health and academic performance [4,5]. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has compiled alarming data revealing the global prevalence of peer violence. These figures, which include experiences of bullying and physical fighting, indicate that approximately 150 million students between the ages of 13 and 15 are affected, affecting both developed and developing countries [6]. The UNICEF report highlights how violence in the school environment affects not only learning, but also the general well-being of students [6]. These adverse effects extend across geographic and economic boundaries, highlighting the need to address this problem globally. Understanding the magnitude of this phenomenon is essential to developing effective prevention and intervention strategies that promote safe and healthy learning environments for all students [7]. Exposure to violence has a major impact on the physical and mental health of adolescents [8]. Teachers

have a partial understanding of the bullying situation—they can identify the victims and the aggressors—but fail to mention the bystanders, whose importance and presence should be recognized and highlighted in this context [9]. Various research has highlighted the serious implications of bullying and school violence on the psychological well-being of young people [10,11]. Studies show a close association between being a victim of bullying and mental health problems, establishing direct links with symptoms such as anxiety, depression, and a significant increase in the risk of suicidal thoughts or behaviors [12–15]. Furthermore, the number of traumatic events, including bullying, has been found to impact the risk of more severe psychological problems, and this affects not only the direct victims, but also those who are bystanders of these situations [16]. Although the focus is on the victims and perpetrators of bullying, it is essential to recognize the role of bystanders, as they can influence the development of bullying by both aggravating its effects and significantly reducing its consequences [17]. Bystanders of bullying situations are those individuals who, either by their passivity or indirect participation, contribute to the maintenance of bullying by not intervening or encouraging acts of violence, thus becoming accomplices of silence [18]. Bystander behaviors are crucial in the perpetuation of school violence and its consequences, being able to be constructive victim-centered (providing support to the victim), constructive bully-centered (telling the bully to stop) or aggressive (threatening the aggressor) [19,20]. Student bystanders are also involved in school violence, either by encouraging the perpetrators' violent behavior towards other students or by providing assistance and support to the victims [21]. One particular study, conducted by Wu et al. [22], highlights that the mental health consequences derived from bullying vary according to the role in the situation, being more pronounced in victims and bystanders than in the bullies themselves. Recent research showed that adolescents who are participants in school violence experience a deterioration in their self-esteem and present a decrease in their coping skills [23]. This phenomenon can negatively affect their self-perception and their ability to cope with future challenges [24].

Self-esteem is identified as a psychological component that encompasses the subjective appraisal that a person has towards themselves, which can be favorable or unfavorable, such appraisal being variable according to different moments and contexts [25]. The term self-esteem is one of the most discussed and ambiguous concepts in psychology. However, all definitions indicate that it has a social origin and is developed through interaction with significant people (family, friends, teachers, . . .), mainly during childhood and adolescence, but its formation remains in constant evolution throughout life [26]. Self-esteem, as a crucial factor in adolescent development, is strongly influenced by the social environment, especially by exposure to situations of violence and problem-solving skills [27]. Recent studies indicate that being a victim of school violence is negatively correlated with both self-esteem and happiness, so that students who have suffered episodes of school violence have lower self-esteem and are less happy [28]. Thus, self-esteem is estimated to promote students' school adjustment, while students who witness acts of school violence show lower school adjustment [29]. Individuals who experience bullying, as well as those who witness it, may experience a range of negative effects, including anxiety, low self-esteem, and depressive symptoms [30–32]. These impacts can manifest in their emotional and mental well-being, underscoring the importance of addressing not only direct victims but also bystanders in bullying prevention and intervention [33]. The study by Álvarez-Quiroz et al. [34] highlights that adolescents who are bystanders of school violence tend to experience a significant decrease in their self-esteem, manifesting insecurities and doubts regarding their personal worth. However, those who experienced school violence tend to become aggressors in the future, unlike those with low self-esteem, who continue to be victims [35]. It is established that boys who bully have significantly higher self-esteem than those who are victims, while in the case of females there is no difference in self-esteem between aggressors and victims [36]. Research suggests that women tend to intervene more frequently than men in harassment situations, yet not all studies agree on the existence of these gender differences in intervention [37]. More focused on bystanders, boys are

estimated to adopt a passive or supportive stance towards the bully in situations of school violence compared to girls [38].

Resilience capacity is understood as the adaptation of a subject to any risk, being crucial to face adversities [39]. Adolescents perceive positive thinking, interpersonal relationship skills, capacity for self-regulation and social support as resilience factors, fundamental elements that allow them to overcome adversities and face challenges effectively in their emotional and social development [40]. Strengthening resilience in adolescents is fundamental to mitigate the risk of depression and improve their mental well-being [41]. Studies such as that of Zhao et al. [42] reveal that adolescents exposed to different risks such as bullying experience a decrease in their resilience capacity, which may hinder their ability to overcome future challenges. Thus, resilience is a capacity that can help young people cope with bullying [43]. However, no significant gender differences in adolescent resilience have been found [44]. Some elements associated with resilience, such as the ability to be optimistic, self-confidence, adaptability to change, tolerance, and sensitivity, appear to reduce the likelihood of students being victimized [45]. Educational initiatives that promote resilience, coping strategies, and well-being are crucial in adolescence because these programs act as protective and preventive measures against the repercussions of bullying [46]. However, recent research shows that interventions account for a 19–20% global reduction in bullying perpetration [47]. To effectively address violence, it is crucial to sensitize bystanders to their role, foster empathy for victimized youth, and strengthen their confidence in their ability to advocate for these young people [48].

In addition, moderating and protective factors may influence the relationship between witnessing school violence, self-esteem and resilience. Student bystanders of school violence situations are afraid to become involved in helping their peers because of the fact that bullies act against them and they become victims of school violence [49–51]. Another aspect that can also occur is that bystanders may end up becoming aggressors, due to the fact that they establish alliances with their aggressor peers against more vulnerable peers [52]. Bystanders who act by informing adults, or defending or comforting the victim challenge the offender's control and may provide negative reinforcement of the offender's actions [53]. The elements that influence how bystanders respond to cyberbullying can be divided into two categories: personal factors, such as age, gender, empathy, morale, Internet use, and self-confidence, and social factors, such as relationship with the people involved, perceived social norms, and support from their environment [54,55]. In relation to self-esteem, those who engage in traditional bullying tend to have high self-esteem, while those with low self-esteem might join in cyberbullying or simply ignore it [56]. Some findings highlight a strong association between self-esteem, social problem-solving skills, and fair advocacy behaviors toward the bullying victim; this suggests that individuals with higher self-esteem and strong social problem-solving skills are more inclined to actively and fairly intervene in bullying situations to protect the victim [56]. Research such as that of González and Molero [24] suggests that social support and the development of coping skills can mitigate the negative effects of witnessing violence at school.

Significance of the Study, Objective, and Hypotheses

Understanding the complex interaction between the observation of school violence, self-esteem, and resilience in adolescents is essential to develop effective intervention and prevention strategies. This will allow the creation of safe school environments that foster the emotional and psychological well-being of adolescents, thus promoting healthy holistic development. In view of these benefits, the present research aims to identify the role of being a bystander of school violence on self-esteem and resilience in this crucial developmental stage of adolescence. The initial hypotheses considered are the following:

H1: *The level of self-esteem and resilience is different between bystanders and non-bystanders of school violence.*

H2: *There are gender differences between young bystanders and non-bystanders of school violence in resilience and self-esteem.*

H3: *Resilience and self-esteem are variables that can help bystanders of violence to act in defense of their peers.*

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Research Design and Population

This descriptive analysis followed the guidelines established by the STROBE statement for the execution of cross-sectional studies, thus ensuring the reliability of the research [57]. This methodology allows for a comprehensive view of the characteristics observed at a specific point in time, being particularly useful for examining the relationship between variables at a given point in time [57].

The sample of participants comprised a total of 730 adolescents aged 14–19 years ($M = 14.99$; $SD = 0.86$). All of them were in secondary school, specifically in the third and fourth grades. The selection of this age range was based on the consideration that adolescence is a critical stage in socio-emotional development, where school experiences can have a lasting impact. In terms of gender distribution, 51% of the participants were female, while the remaining 49% were male. This equal proportion ensured a balanced representation of both genders, allowing for a fuller exploration of possible differences in responses related to school violence.

The national profile of the sample revealed that the majority of adolescent participants were of Spanish nationality, representing 93% of the total. Despite this predominance, it was considered important to include students from other backgrounds in order to address possible cultural variations in experiences and perceptions of school violence. This focus on cultural diversity adds depth and relevance to the study's findings, offering a broader view of the problem.

All participants self-identified as either bystanders or non-bystanders of school violence, as determined by an initial question in the questionnaire ("Have you observed situations of school violence among your classmates?"). By means of this question, participants were divided into two groups: bystanders ($n = 332$) and non-bystanders ($n = 398$). This classification allowed us to segment the sample and analyze differences in responses and perceptions between these two groups. However, it is important to keep in mind that this classification is based on the students' own perception, which could introduce biases and limitations in the study. For example, some participants may have underestimated or overestimated their exposure to school violence, which could affect the accuracy of the results. In addition, self-identification may be influenced by factors such as socio-cultural context and personal experiences, which could bias the composition of the groups. Although we have attempted to minimize these biases by excluding those participants who chose not to answer the initial question, it is important to recognize that self-identification has its limitations. Despite these potential biases, this focus on self-identification provides a solid basis for examining individual attitudes and experiences in relation to school violence, contributing to a deeper understanding of this phenomenon from the perspective of the adolescents themselves.

2.2. Measures

A booklet containing meticulously adapted questions and validated tools was employed to comprehensively measure various variables in adolescents. The meticulous process of data collection and measurement encompassed the following key components:

- **Self-esteem:** The assessment of self-esteem relied on the utilization of the Spanish adaptation of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) [58,59], specifically tailored for adolescents. This scale consisted of 10 items designed to gauge feelings towards oneself on a Likert-type scale featuring four response options ("Strongly disagree", "Disagree", "Agree", "Strongly agree"). One of its items is "I am able to do things as

well as most people". The results obtained were subsequently interpreted on a scale ranging from low self-esteem (scoring below 25 points) to high self-esteem (scoring between 30 to 40 points). Notably, the internal consistency of the scale was found to be robust, with a reliability coefficient ($\alpha = 0.83$).

- Resilience: Resilience was measured with the reduced variant CD-RISC10 [60], based on the original Connor–Davidson (CD-RISC) scale [61]. This ten-item scale aimed to assess the participants' ability to overcome traumatic situations, employing a Likert scale with four response options: "Never", "Sometimes", "Frequently", "Always". One item of this scale is: "I am able to adapt when changes occur". The scale demonstrated commendable internal consistency, with a reliability coefficient ($\alpha = 0.83$). This meticulous measurement of resilience provides valuable insights into the adolescents' capacity to cope with and navigate challenging circumstances.
- Intervention in school violence: To garner additional insights into the dynamics of adolescents who observe instances of school violence, a specific focus was directed towards understanding whether these individuals had ever attempted to intervene with the intention of assisting their classmates. For this purpose, an ad hoc set of questions was incorporated, prominently featuring the following inquiry: "Have you ever intervened to defend your classmates who were being bullied?" Notably, this question necessitated a dichotomous response from the adolescent bystanders of school violence. Exposing that this question was only mandatory for those who had previously responded that they had been bystanders of school violence, so those who had not been bystanders did not answer this question. This nuanced exploration sheds light on the proactive role some adolescents may take in addressing and preventing instances of violence within the school environment, adding a valuable layer of understanding to the study's findings. However, to comment again, as was the case when students were asked if they had observed school violence, the responses are conditioned by the perceptions of individual adolescents.

2.3. Procedure and Data Collection

With the design and selection of instruments established, the implementation phase of the study proceeded, a meticulous process that involved coordination with several secondary schools in different locations in the province of Almería, Spain. Several schools were contacted and a total of six schools enthusiastically agreed to participate in the research, marking the beginning of a valuable collaboration in understanding the dynamics of school violence among adolescents. The diversity of the municipalities selected for the sample sought to address possible contextual variations in students' experiences, contributing to a more holistic representation of the educational reality in the region.

After the six schools agreed to participate in the study, data collection began. Prior to the start of this process, a detailed briefing session was held for both students and their legal guardians. In this session, detailed information on the aims and scope of the research was provided, and informed consent was obtained from the participants and their legal representatives. This ethical approach ensured transparency and respect for participants' rights, which are fundamental in any research involving human subjects. In order to collect these data, several scheduled visits were made by the author (AGM). This data collection was carried out in person in the students' regular classroom, where the classroom tutor and the author were present. During these visits, students were guided to complete the questionnaires in a supervised manner, thus ensuring the completeness and accuracy of the responses. The data collection period spanned from February to June 2022, thus providing a significant time window to capture the dynamics and experiences of adolescents in the school environment. This extended collection period allowed for a representative sample of the diverse situations and contexts that students may have faced throughout the academic year.

This study was conducted according to the highest ethical standards. The research protocol was submitted to and approved by the Bioethics Committee on Human Research

of the University of Almeria under reference UALBIO2021/025. This approval guarantees that all practices and procedures carried out during the study complied with fundamental ethical principles, ensuring the integrity and well-being of the participants involved in the research.

2.4. Data Exploration and Analysis

The critical phase of the study, data analysis, was carried out using the statistical software SPSS version 28 (IBM, Armonk, NY, USA) [62], a tool recognized for its efficiency in processing and interpreting complex data. In order to ensure the reliability of the instruments used, Cronbach's alpha coefficient, a widely accepted metric in the assessment of internal consistency, was applied. The interpretation of the values was based on the guidelines established by Cronbach [63], considering values below 0.5 as unacceptable, between 0.5 and 0.6 as poor, between 0.6 and 0.7 as questionable, between 0.7 and 0.8 as acceptable, between 0.8 and 0.9 as good, and above 0.9 as excellent. This rigorous analysis ensured the reliability and robustness of the instruments used to measure the variables.

In the quest to provide a holistic view of the participating students, a descriptive analysis was carried out that shed light on various characteristics and dynamics present in the sample. This approach allowed for an in-depth understanding of the participants, transcending simple statistics and providing a meaningful context for further interpretations.

To identify possible differences between observing and non-observing adolescents on the variables analyzed, a Student's *t*-test, a robust tool for detecting significant differences, was applied. The magnitude of these differences was assessed using Cohen's *d* [64], a measure that classifies effect size as small (0.50), medium (0.50–0.80), and large (≥ 0.80), thus providing a more complete perspective on the practical relevance of the results obtained. This Student's *t*-test was also used to determine the differences in the level of self-esteem and resilience between the two groups (bystanders and non-bystanders) according to sex. Furthermore, after finding out these differences according to the two main groups, the group of bystanders was subdivided into two other groups: young people who intervene to help when they observe bullying situations and young people who do not intervene; the Student's *t*-test was also used to find out the differences between these two subgroups.

Additionally, a binary logistic regression analysis was conducted; this is a powerful methodology to identify the variables that most influence the intervention of adolescent bystanders of school violence. Likelihood was assessed using the odds ratio [$\exp(\beta)$], a measure highlighting effect size [65]. Statistical significance was set at a level of $p < 0.05$, thus ensuring the robustness of the conclusions derived from this analysis. This multi-faceted approach to data analysis was not only limited to the description of patterns but delved deeper into the identification of key factors and underlying relationships, providing a substantial contribution to a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of school violence among adolescents.

3. Results

3.1. Differences Found between Bystander and Non-Bystander

The data in Table 1 show the differences between two profiles examined: bystanders of school violence and non-bystanders.

Table 1. Differences between bystanders and non-bystanders.

	Bystander (<i>n</i> = 332)		Non-Bystander (<i>n</i> = 398)		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Resilience	26.34	7.31	26.96	6.73	1.19	0.234	-
Self-esteem	28.05	5.87	29.11	5.92	2.42 *	0.016	0.31

* $p < 0.05$.

These revealing data provide detailed insight into differences in self-esteem and resilience between adolescents who have witnessed school violence and those who have not. Adolescents who have not observed such situations have higher levels of self-esteem ($M = 29.11$; $SD = 5.92$), compared to their peers who have witnessed school violence, whose mean is slightly lower ($M = 28.05$; $SD = 5.87$). This contrast underlines the significant influence that exposure to school violence can have on adolescents' self-perception, highlighting the importance of addressing this phenomenon not only from an interactional perspective, but also considering its impacts on individual psychological health.

Regarding resilience, although non-bystanders exhibit a higher mean, the results did not reach statistical significance. This finding suggests that while resilience may play a role in how adolescents deal with situations of school violence, there are other factors or complexities at play that require further and more detailed analysis.

After discovering these significant differences in the study's core variables, resilience and self-esteem, interest arose to investigate whether there were also disparities based on the sex of the participants, as shown in Table 2. This additional analysis provides further insight into how experiences of school violence may interact with adolescent gender characteristics.

Table 2. Differences between bystanders and non-bystanders by sex.

Bystanders							
	Girls (<i>n</i> = 178)		Boys (<i>n</i> = 154)		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Resilience	26.28	7.03	26.41	7.63	0.15	0.876	-
Self-esteem	27.63	5.90	28.54	5.82	1.41	0.159	-
Non-bystanders							
	Girls (<i>n</i> = 194)		Boys (<i>n</i> = 204)		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Resilience	25.78	6.50	28.08	6.76	3.45 ***	<0.001	0.35
Self-esteem	27.48	5.35	30.67	6.02	5.56 ***	<0.001	0.56

*** $p < 0.001$.

The data collected reveal that male participants who have not been bystanders of school violence show higher levels of both resilience ($M = 28.08$; $SD = 6.76$) and self-esteem ($M = 30.67$; $SD = 6.02$) compared to their female peers. These results highlight the importance of considering gender dimensions when addressing the impact of school violence, as they suggest that the effects of these experiences may manifest differentially depending on the sex of the adolescent. These findings also offer an opportunity to further explore underlying factors that may contribute to these disparities, such as social expectations, cultural pressures, and group dynamics, providing a more complete picture of the effects of school violence on adolescent mental health.

In contrast, no significant differences were observed between male and female sexes in the group of school violence bystanders. This finding suggests that when adolescents have witnessed school violence, gender disparities in resilience and self-esteem may be attenuated or not as pronounced.

Once the data had been obtained in reference to the groups of bystanders and non-bystanders, we wanted to find out whether those who were bystanders of violence acted by intervening to help their peers or, on the contrary, did not intervene in such situations (see Table 3).

Table 3. Differences between intervening and non-intervening adolescent bystanders of violence.

	Interveners (<i>n</i> = 220)		Non-Interveners (<i>n</i> = 102)		<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			
Resilience	27.11	6.95	25.09	7.64	−2.35	0.010 **	0.28
Self-esteem	27.89	5.70	28.48	6.29	−2.27	0.201	-

** *p* < 0.01.

The results reveal that those who do intervene show a significantly higher resilience score ($M = 27.11$; $SD = 6.95$) compared to their peers who choose not to intervene ($M = 25.09$; $SD = 7.64$). These results suggest a potential connection between willingness to intervene and resilience to adverse situations. Although no significant differences were found for self-esteem, the positive relationship between resilience and willingness to intervene highlights the importance of cultivating this skill in adolescents as an effective strategy to address and counteract school violence.

3.2. Intervening in Situations of School Violence: Relationships According to Sex, Resilience, and Self-Esteem

The exploration of the probability of intervening in school violence situations as a function of gender, resilience, and self-esteem was approached by means of a binary logistic regression analysis. This analysis sought to determine the relationship between the dependent variable (intervention in school violence situations) and the independent or predictor variables (sex, self-esteem, and resilience). The results revealed in Table 4 provide a revealing insight into the factors that influence students' willingness to intervene to help their peers.

Table 4. Possible variables that encourage bystanders to help their peers in bullying situations.

Variables	β	Standard Error	Sig.	Exp (β)	95% C.I. for EXP (β)	
					Inferior	Superior
Sex	0.40	0.24	0.102	1.49	0.92	2.42
Resilience	0.07	0.02	<0.001	1.07	1.02	1.11
Self-esteem	−0.06	0.02	0.013	0.93	0.89	0.98
Constant	0.57	0.63	0.368	1.77		

The statistical data suggest that resilience and self-esteem are factors that may be determinants of adolescents' willingness to help their peers in situations of school violence. Both resilience and self-esteem scored significantly, implying that they play a crucial role in adolescents' decision to engage in acts of school violence to protect their peers.

When explored further, odds ratio (OR) analysis reveals intriguing nuances. Resilience turns out to be a particularly prominent factor, with a positive OR of 1.07. These results reveal that students with higher levels of resilience are 1.07 times more likely to defend their peers. This result highlights the importance of cultivating resilience as a key component in fostering proactive and supportive interventions in situations of school violence.

On the other hand, self-esteem also shows a significant result but with a negative beta. Specifically, with a negative OR of 0.93. These data suggest that students with higher levels of self-esteem are 0.93 times less likely to act in defense of their bullied peers. In short, students with higher self-esteem are less involved in helping their peers. This complex finding points to a possible interaction between self-esteem and willingness to intervene, indicating that adolescents with higher self-esteem may be less inclined to actively participate in situations of school violence.

4. Discussion

Based on this study, the relationship between the role of being a bystander of school violence (or not a bystander) and the self-esteem and resilience of adolescents has been investigated. The scientific literature exposes the existing problem with school violence and the consequences that this problem has on young people [1,6,8]. Most previous research focuses on identifying existing relationships with other variables in school violence roles focused on being a victim or being an aggressor [12–16,22,23]. These studies are scarcer when it comes to research on young people who are bystanders or non-bystanders of school violence, so this research wanted to inquire about this role that also exists and can affect adolescents.

The first hypothesis tested indicates that there are differences between adolescents who are bystanders of school violence and those who are not bystanders in their level of self-esteem and resilience. This hypothesis has been accepted, because the results obtained indicate that non-bystanders present a higher level of self-esteem compared to bystanders. This idea is related to the fact that self-esteem is influenced by their social environment, with exposure to violence being a key factor [27]. Therefore, those young people who are victims of school violence or bystanders of it tend to have lower self-esteem [28,34].

The second hypothesis refers to the fact that there are gender differences between bystanders and non-bystanders in terms of their self-esteem and resilience. The data analyzed indicate that boys who are not bystanders of school violence have higher levels of both resilience and self-esteem than girls. There is no clear evidence of differences according to bystander role, but previous studies indicate that aggressor boys present higher self-esteem than girls [36]. Regarding resilience, it is estimated that this capacity helps young people not to be involved in school violence situations, but there is no clear evidence that addresses differences according to sex [44,45].

Finally, the third hypothesis focuses on knowing which of the variables analyzed may promote adolescents who are bystanders of school violence to act in defense of their peers. The results obtained after regression analysis indicate that both resilience and self-esteem are variables that can help in these situations of school violence.

On the one hand, a high level of resilience may be essential for adolescent bystanders to intervene to help their peers. This idea is related to resilience being a favorable ability to cope with adversities, which helps young people cope with school violence situations and mitigates the negative effects [39,41,43]. On the other hand, in reference to self-esteem, the results expose that self-esteem is a negative variable in helping young people to cope with situations of school violence. Therefore, a high level of self-esteem in adolescents does not favor them to intervene to help their peers. This approach may be linked to the fact that bullies tend to have a high level of self-esteem, whereas those with low self-esteem are the victims [35].

5. Conclusions

To conclude, it is worth highlighting how this study has provided a valuable exploration into one of the commonly overlooked roles of school violence: being a bystander or non-bystander of school violence. During adolescence, the role of bystander to school violence has been revealed as a role that is related to highly relevant variables such as self-esteem and resilience. The present research has served to learn a little more about this role, thus providing the existing differences between being a bystander and a non-bystander of school violence in adolescence. On the other hand, this study has also helped us to identify which variables can help the bystander students to intervene to help their peers in these conflictive situations. It should be noted that since this is a cross-sectional study, we cannot indicate that self-esteem and resilience are protective factors that help to intervene in situations of peer violence. However, based on the statistical results obtained, we can speak about the likelihood of these constructs (self-esteem and resilience) in adolescent students. One of the main limitations identified in this study is the scarce scientific attention focused on the role of being a bystander or non-bystander of school violence in the adolescent stage.

Most studies tend to focus on more traditional roles, such as being a victim or aggressor. This gap in research highlights the need for future studies that focus specifically on how being a bystander affects adolescents, with the goal of better understanding the associated emotional and psychological consequences. Another limitation of the study is that the different groups of participants have been elaborated from a question that was asked to the young people themselves, so it starts from their perception of what they consider school violence. In addition, it is important to note that one role does not preclude the possibility of assuming another; that is, an individual acting as a school violence bystander may, at the same time, play roles of aggressor or victim. This complexity underscores the importance of addressing school violence holistically, recognizing that individuals may occupy multiple roles in different situations. As for future lines of research, it would be interesting to know the different styles of intervention assumed by the bystanders of school violence (helping the victim, constructive intervention, lack of reaction, reinforcement of the aggressor, . . .) and the frequency of these styles. In addition, another proposal could be to address the different roles that are executed within school violence and to explore how these roles may interact with each other. Also, the need to investigate other variables that may have a positive impact on adolescent development is suggested, with the aim of gaining a more complete understanding of the factors that influence the relationship between school violence and adolescent well-being.

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Data Availability Statement: The data are available upon request to the corresponding author.

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