

Resilience in families of the Colombian army with a member deprived of liberty⁶

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Abstract

A qualitative study of resilient resources was carried out in families of the Colombian army with a member deprived of liberty for reasons of service. 16 families that attended the army detention centers participated in the study. Overall results showed that the imprisonment experience transformed the family's identity and functioning in terms of cohesion, horizontal communication, bonds of affection, attachment and cooperation, maternal leadership, the cooperation of the extended family, and extension of support to other family systems. Moreover, resilient resources such as creative adaptation to the crisis, self-confidence, positive attitude, sense of humor, creativity, collaboration, commitment, emotional self-regulation, and the strengthening of spirituality arose in the face of crisis.

Keywords

Family Resilience, Deprivation of Liberty, Army.

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La resiliencia en familias del ejército colombiano con un miembro privado de la libertad

Resumen

Se realizó un estudio cualitativo de recursos resilientes en familias del ejército colombiano con un miembro privado de la libertad por motivos de servicio. En el estudio participaron 16 familias que acudieron a los centros de detención del ejército. Los resultados generales mostraron que la experiencia del encarcelamiento transformó la identidad y el funcionamiento de la familia en términos de cohesión, comunicación horizontal, lazos de afecto, apego y cooperación, liderazgo materno, cooperación de la familia extensa y extensión del apoyo a otros sistemas familiares. Además, ante la crisis surgieron recursos resilientes como la adaptación creativa a los momentos de crisis, la autoconfianza, la actitud positiva, el sentido del humor, la creatividad, la colaboración, el compromiso, la autorregulación emocional y el fortalecimiento de la espiritualidad.

Palabras clave

Resiliencia familiar, privación de la libertad, ejército.

Resiliência em famílias do exército colombiano com um membro privado de liberdade

Resumo

Um estudo qualitativo de recursos resilientes foi realizado em famílias do exército colombiano com um membro privado de liberdade por motivos de serviço. Participaram do estudo 16 famílias que frequentavam os centros de detenção do exército. Os resultados gerais mostraram que a experiência do aprisionamento transformou a identidade e o funcionamento da família em termos de coesão, comunicação horizontal, laços de afeto, apego e cooperação, liderança materna, cooperação da família extensa e extensão do apoio a outros sistemas familiares. Além disso, recursos resilientes como adaptação criativa à crise, autoconfiança, atitude positiva, senso de humor, criatividade, colaboração, compromisso, autorregulação emocional e fortalecimento da espiritualidade surgiram diante da crise.

Palavras chave

Resiliência Familiar, Privação de Liberdade, Exército.

Introduction

One of the permanent purposes of the Family and Welfare Management of the National Army (FWMNA) of Colombia has been to ensure the welfare and family unity of the Military, through the development of programs of psychosocial care, social assistance, recreation, culture, sports and material and immaterial benefits. These programs are also aimed at their families, as they are part of their vital, relational and survival context. This purpose becomes more relevant in the context of the conflict that the country has experienced for more than 50 years and recent negotiations.

Soldiers, non-commissioned officers and officers may experience side effects associated with active duty. In these situations, the Family and Welfare Management provides support to their family, social and community life, which can increase their sense of accompaniment and well-being, as well as their sense of belonging. These initiatives demonstrate the Army's institutional sense of responsibility for its members and their families.

The present study investigated the resilient resources in the families of the military deprived of Liberty by service actions. The institution considers them and their families as a sensitive population that requires permanent attention which results from the pain that this situation represents for all members.

Likewise, it was of great value to investigate beyond the mere description of the adverse and adjacent experiences that

affect families with a member deprived of liberty. It was also a challenge to explore the resources and generativity that emerged from families to face the negative impacts of loss of freedom, in other words, family resilience.

The present investigation identified limitations and evidenced a void of studies that address issues such as: the loss of freedom due to service actions, scenarios with a long history of conflict, the inclusion of the family as part of the military family and, especially, of resilience as family resilience. In addition to identifying a knowledge gap, it allowed recognizing a potential field for further studies in Psychology, the Family and Welfare Management of the Army, and the Faculty of Psychology of the Santo Tomás University, Bogotá. These findings will provide represent input for future research carried out in the Colombian post-conflict framework.

However, the context of the Colombian conflict responds to a complex historical phenomenon dating back at least 60 years. Some academics have identified its roots even in the nineteenth century, since the establishment of the Republic and the institutionalization of political parties, later through a series of riots called "El Bogotazo" (1948), until the emergence of the agreement between political parties called "El Frente Nacional" (1958-74) as a response to such facts. The complexity is also due to the subsequent convergence of events such as the installment of drug trafficking, drug trafficking terrorism and the presence of new actors who used the pathways of violence as a mechanism to transform society. For its part, the State, in compliance with its constitutional duty, has acted as a leading actor in the preservation of the Republic against all these

changes or exercises considered illegitimate (Center for International Affairs of Barcelona, 2019, CIDOB).

Thus, to understand the Colombian conflict, the huge number of victims must be considered, which according to the Historical Memory Center (2013) cited by CIDOB (2019) refers that between 1958 and 2012:

[..] The conflict caused the death of 40,787 fighters and 177,307 civilians. The number of missing persons between 1981 and 2010 was 25,000, the number of kidnapped 27,023 and 150,000 the number of murders. Of this last figure, 38.4% were the responsibility of the paramilitaries, 16.8% of the guerrillas and 10.1% of the Public Force.

Now, just as the Military Forces (Public Force), particularly the Army was responsible, it was also the victim of a negative impact, reflected in casualties in combat and deprivation of liberty due to service. This last negative impact, of the interest of this investigation and denominated adverse collateral situation or event, affected not only the military but their families, but also led both to be resilient to this painful situation.

Resilience can be conceptualized, following Werner and Smith (1982), as the ability that people have to cope with, overcome, learn, resist, even transform themselves, in a constructive and generative way, in light of the experience and the impact, in many cases negative, of adverse and traumatic events, derived from conditions of vulnerability, accidents, social or natural tragedies, to name a few, that test people, communities, or even society.

More precisely, *the crisis situation*, in this case deprivation of liberty for actions of service in military families within the framework of the conflict and post-conflict, represents the rupture, the transformation, the limit, because it means discomfort and is present in the form of mood disorders, adjustment in the family system, behavioral problems in the parent-child relationship, or double-engaging dialogues in the parental system (Jaramillo-Moreno & Cuervo, 2016).

Furthermore, the loss of liberty depends on actions of service, where the military that meets his duty gets in conflict with the law, and therefore is deprived of liberty. He loses his rights partially or completely and is detached physically. This creates a crisis. However, the level of discomfort will always depend on the meaning of this event, or in other terms, *the narrative or meaning of the crisis*.

On the other hand, resilience can be considered an onto- and phylogenetic human property because one can highlight that it has a genetic correlate (Bradley, Davis, Wingo, Mercer & Ressler, 2013). This would indicate precisely that it is possible to learn to be resilient only because we are endowed with this ability.

This ability is perceptible based on what we could call *Resilient Resources* that can be used by individuals or by families. They are *cognitive*: search for information, resignifying the crisis, problem solution, among others; *affective*: affection dissociation, belief and assurance of being loved, and *behavioral*: response to a crisis, network creation, search for help, or operative solutions in light of the consequences of the crisis (Mrazek & Mrazek, 1987).

In a nutshell, one learns not only to be resilient, but the human being *per se* is resilient and creates identity resilient narratives. Thanks to this fact, one can adapt to the environment where this ability, together with other demands, is tested. In this way, one learns to cope with these demands, to build on them, despite them.

Furthermore, even though one can observe that resilience is present in people and communities alike, in order to deploy it, it is necessary to have access to conditions such as the existence of a link and a secure attachment with a tutor, a mentor or a resilient community, the existence of social networks and supporting cultural networks that foster the support, and the feeling of cohesion, containment, life enrichment, bond of affection, and love (Cyrułnik, 2013; Rutter, 1993; Werner & Smith, 1982). Moreover, one also requires access to the satisfaction of needs, the possibility of participating socially, and in a community, the existence of relations that enhance the autonomy, approval, and social acceptance (Pereira, 2007).

Thus, one may conclude that even if family resilience refers to an ability that is facilitated by previous protection factors, it should also be considered as an emergent quality that indicates how families organize their lives around “events” or “problems” that have been experienced and solved, and represent a conversational and dialectic dynamics, i.e., reader-writer-reader; in other words, it is a form of narrative, constructive, generative and transforming with a set of meanings (White & Epsom, 1993). They refer not only to a text but also to the identity of the military family, to its relationship to social identity, in this case, a communitarian identity,

represented in the military context (Solar-te & Lozano, 2015)

Therefore, even if the previous conditions come from a wide context, and also from the links and form of relationships between people, families, communities, and society, it is necessary to underline the ecological, systemic, inter-relational, social, political, and historical position; in other words, the identity position of resilience.

One may conclude initially that precisely because of the gaps or relational, affective, economic, social, and political absences, one could be resilient as long as one is immersed in an adverse or aggressive context. In this case, one inherits, learns or shares a resilient identity and, at the same time, develops protection factors that facilitate the emergence and possible return to the initial form or, alternatively, a successful and generative transformation may take place when faced with trauma, violence, adversity, or vulnerability.

Furthermore, and given the existence and visibility of this network of relationships and fabrics, of continuous changes, and the adaptive and generative ability of people, one can also understand that, based on them, alternative narratives or performativity may emerge in light of macro- or micro-transformations or impacts. Precisely this would allow people, that face the limit, the proof, and the adversity, to propose possible worlds (Bruner, 2004), answers to questions initially unsolvable, or to implement creativity to solve overwhelming problems.

Specifically, the family as an ecosystem unit of survival (Hernández, 2008), where one finds the relational interweaving that

creates a world vision and marks the forms and bonding rituals with oneself and others, is the place where the pillars of resilience are erected, and resilience is deployed in several forms. They include protection factors or resilient resources proper such as creativity to solve problems, relationships based on bonding love, tenderness and love, spirituality, ability to provide new meanings to adversity and their actors, regulation of the resulting affection in the adverse situation, the generative adaptation to crisis situations, cohesion and family protection in light of adverse or traumatic events, the transformational forms in the relationship, roles and underlying meanings, the exchange and permeability with other human systems in order to improve one's own resources, together with the social support, maturity, family evolution and one's identity, the ability to forgive, to feel empathy and compassion concerning perpetrators, people or families in a similar situation.

However, and in order to make a few clarifications, it is important to underline that they are not exclusive resources of a family or its identity, but they emerge among people and extended systems (Imber-Black, 1988), and they transcend communitarian, social, and regional spheres.

As regards the family and its relations with other systems, in the Colombian National Army, family identities respond to particular dynamics (Cabrera, Cuervo & Martínez, 2016), the history, evolution cycles, and the experience of normative and non-normative stressors. They are not disconnected from relationships that affect them unintentionally, such as the transformation of families due to

economic and socio-political causes, and specifically because of the communitarian identities, with which they are related and that model their initial formation.

As an additional element, as long as particular dynamics are concerned, the Colombian army, in contrast with other armed forces in the world and specifically soldiers, is the only military that remains more than 10 years continuously in war zones (Pedraza, 2015).

This situation generates particularities not only in the individual who lives the experience, but also in the dynamics of the military families in each of these spheres, in which they develop, and in the way that they cope with and adapt to crises.

The fact that Colombian soldiers have no contact or communication with their families becomes a factor that creates complex emotional situations (Pedraza, 2015). These conditions, according to the network of family, institutional and social support, may be problematic or, on the contrary, a protection factor for structuring family resilience. In Colombia, there are records of investigations that account for training made with military and police personnel (Cabrera-García, Casas, Pardo & Rodríguez, 2017).

In this same sense, García-Silgo (2013) has identified efforts in different armed forces in the world in order to implement training programs in resilience, such as the Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness (CSF2) in the United States, and other similar efforts in countries such as Canada, Australia, South Africa, United Kingdom, Holland, New Zealand, Norway, Czech Republic, Israel, and Spain.

On the other hand, also in terms of resilience, when one analyzes the military model by demands-resources, based on the theory of resource conservation by Hobfoll (1989), and proposed by Bates et al. (2010), one identifies that the psychosocial problems associated with the mission of the military, or caused by the service, produce the increase of mental diseases as well as work absenteeism. This translates itself into a decrease in welfare and health in the military and his family. These problems are explained partly based on variables such as family support that modulates the result of stressors on health.

In general, the resilience models developed for the armies usually consider a wide and complex range of variables that, when taken together, affect the military and his family.

This means that if we can talk about the Colombian family, it would be necessary to establish the region of origin, the inter-and transculturality as well as the identity of the military family, more specifically of the national army because it may have similarities with other forces such as the Navy, the Air Force, or the national police. However, from the identity point of view, they are unique because they are related to aspects that derive from the military mission itself such as continued mobility of family systems between regions in the country or even abroad, the deployment derived from actions of service, the rituals, roles, and forms of interaction that are socialized and anchored historically. They also include the context of housing and relationships, official and fiscal houses where they get together and create a sense of community, together with the organizational climate that goes beyond the boundaries of the barracks and offices

and penetrates into the families at the nuclear or extended levels.

Therefore, from an ecosystem position, these family and communitarian formations are related to non-normative circumstances or stressors such as the internal conflict, and the consequences derived from service.

Thus, one can observe that the identity of the military family, its vulnerability, and resilience are conditioned not only by micro- and mesosystemic aspects, but also by missionary factors that are dependent on the exo- and macro-systemic levels that concretize at present by complying orders from their commanders, for they are related to the rupture of the normativity that regulates the army's missionary work of the national army.

Method

A qualitative study was carried out (Hernández, Fernández & Baptista, 2010) according to the narrative topic model (Conelly & Clandinin, 1990), and a semi-structured interview was also used as a research tool (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Intentional (León & Montero, 2003) and by convenience sampling (Strauss & Corbin, 2002) taking advantage of the typical cases (those which matched the inclusion requirements of the research) (Hernández, Fernández & Baptista, 2010) was applied to 16 families, represented by the wives of professional soldiers, non-commissioned officers, and officers,

members of the Army who had been deprived of liberty by causes of the service, and who attended Family Centers of the National Army (in Spanish CEFAB), attached to Family and Welfare Management of the National Army (FWMNA). All of the CEFAB of the Country participated, who

are located in the batallions described below (See Table 2).

The semi-structured interview had 31 open questions. So the questions maintained correspondence to the categories, the sense matrix strategy was used.

Table 1.

Sense Matrix: Triangulation Categories and Interview Outline

Resilient Sources	Definition of the Category or Code:	Questions:
	Characteristics of families, individuals and communities, of an emergent nature, that is to say, situations arising from experience and situations: conflictive, adverse and traumatic.	Has the current situation motivated you to look for information that allows you to learn and become informed about the process? How accurate was this information? What was the intention in carrying it out? What good did this information provide? Information search.
	Subcategories: Information Search, Forgiveness Reconciliation, Resignification of Events.	Before your family was deprived from liberty what was your perspective on life, and how do you see it today? Pardon-reconciliation.
		How is your reaction when you receive adverse news or find out problems you cannot solve, related to your relative who is deprived of Liberty? Re-signification of events.

Source: Authors elaboration.

Interviews were carried out by a team of professionals affiliated with FWMNA, and composed by a psychologist, social workers, and lawyers, previously trained in qualitative research, and interview techniques for a sensitive population (with difficulties or any level of vulnerability), due to causes of service of the military missionary work. Participating families were selected based on the following criteria:

- a. To have a legal marital connection.
- b. At least one member of the family should be detained.
- c. Voluntary participation in the process.

In all cases, the husband in detention was informed and agreed on the participation of his family in the process. The participants were distributed as follows:

Table 2.

Distribution of participants by a unit of location in the families.

Number	Denomination	City of Origin
1	CEFAB BR13 Brigade 13	Bogotá
2	CEFAB BRLOG Logistics Brigade No. 1	Bogotá
3	CEFAB CSUR Southern Canton	Bogotá
4	CEFAB BRCOM Brigade of Communications	Bogotá

Continúa

Continuación

Number	Denomination	City of Origin
5	CEFAB CEMIL Center for Military Education	Bogotá
6	CEFAB ESMIC Military School of Cadets	Bogotá
7	CEFAB DAAVA Aviation Brigade No. 33	Bogotá
8	CEFAB Visitation Rooms	Bogotá
9	CEFAB BR02 Brigade 02	Barranquilla
10	CEFAB BR04 Brigade 04	Medellín
11	CEFAB BR05 Brigade 05	Bucaramanga
12	CEFAB BR 07 Brigade 07	Villavicencio
13	CEFAB BR10 Brigade 10	Valledupar
14	CEFAB BICAZ BICAZ	San Vicente del Caguán
15	CEFAB BR16 Brigade 16	Yopal
16	CEFAB FUTZE Joint Task Zeus	Chaparral

For the interpretation and analysis of the interviews, the software Atlas Ti was used as well as the following analysis codes: *Family Identity, Meaning of the Crisis, Resilient Resources*.

For the analysis and interpretation of data, the process of: open coding was carried out because it was intended to combine techniques such as: a) “search for people, sites or events where data related to categories, their properties and dimensions can be collected” (p.227) and also b) “proceed in a systematic way, going from person to person or from place to place (...) sampling based on *convenience*” (Strauss & Corbin, 2002, p.227) (The italics are ours).

For the identification of the topics, a previous content analysis was performed and the topics were identified through the *recurring patterns analysis* (Miles & Huberman, 2015) which referred to the words “patterns that can often be found under the heading of repeated themes, causes / explanations, interpersonal relationships and theoretical constructions” (p.216).

Regarding the recognition of the topics, Family Identity, Meaning of the Crisis, Resilient Resources, a reflective interpretive analysis was carried out that sought recognition of the relationships between categories and their link to experience (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998 cited by Gibbs, 2007), in this case of resilient resources and the

adverse situation of the loss of freedom, in such a way that validity was preserved.

According to the ethical and bioethical considerations, the research was approved by the center of Research Management of the Faculty of Psychology at Santo Tomás University. It was developed within the framework of *Law 1090, 2006*, according to which the exercise of the profession of a psychologist is regulated and the *Deontological and Bioethical Code* is issued. In accord with the resolution 008430 of 1993 that regulates research on humans, a *minimum risk* was established. Therefore, an open and voluntary call was made. The terms, the goals and the management of information were explained to the participants. Informed consent was signed. Later, the results were presented to the participants.

Regarding the application and possible consequences, and concerning a possible maleficence, all participants continue with the process of psychosocial assistance at CEFAB in the corresponding cities and municipalities of origin.

Results

Family identity and crisis due to deprivation of liberty

To talk about the military families with a member deprived of liberty, it is necessary to acknowledge from their own experience that deprivation of liberty does not

transform their identity to a great extent, whereas the family roles indicate that:

The father is seen as a moderator and generator of spaces for dialogue and family unity, and despite his physical distance, he acquires a position of virtuality that renders him present, even if he is far away. The mother is considered the main actor because she is present, regulating, executing, and managing the family. She is the one that assumes the functions traditionally assigned to the father, and she also assumes the type of paternity-maternity role that demands the transposition of tasks that are sometimes shared by grandmothers or by any other relative in the extended family and, according to the life cycle, with the children (Jaramillo-Moreno & Cuervo, 2016, p. 230).

Additionally, and in relation to the family communication, they reflect, to a great extent, cooperative dynamics because, due to the deployment or mobility of the father on account of the conflict or the missionary work of the military, the father leaves an empty space within the family system. This would imply that the mother has to use TICS as frequent mediators in order to channel or supply the link between the father and his family. In other terms, it is like a "distance command" that delegates the father's responsibilities or statements. This implies not only the transmission of instructions, but also to carry out some kind of parental control, to channel affection, and to show interest for the members of the family, their welfare as well as the inclusion of other social roles that are required institutionally for understanding his family.

Thus, one can see the type of extension of the channels and forms of connection with the military missional work that represents the best way to connect the families.

However, the military families are not always distanced by the actions of service and in this respect, one should add that, concerning the communication and its meanings, even if being present enriches the family life, it is characterized by functional dialogues that, as said before, are loaded with instructions and exercises of verification related to the roles and tasks socially, and institutionally established. The resignifying and reconfiguration of these forms of relationships are associated with aspects of rank, position, and unit, to which the father is assigned. It should be noted that only when they get to be high officers, Major, Lieutenant Colonel, and Colonel, they may appeal to exercise more physical and affective closeness that facilitate the construction of meanings and connections with the family members. These meanings are channeled basically in everyday places, living together, in privacy, and conversation. The latter is gained in the dialogic meaning, when having breakfast, lunch, and dinner, together in academic activities, entertainment, cultural spaces, and spirituality.

Moreover, one can observe in particular that deprivation of liberty implies surprisingly closeness in the family at the communicative level because, despite confinement, the families may have access more easily to these dialogic spaces due to their closeness. Even if they are limited, one should remember the differences between deprivation of liberty for the military and the civilians because, in the former case, they have a more extended basis for interaction with their families, and they are given the

possibility to improve relationships. The deprivation of liberty also allows for the emergence of new dialogues, and emotional experiences concerning the family, its history, roles, rules, individual and familiar projects, even when that confinement site is not nearby.

Concerning the connection and communication in the family, due to the mobility of the father, they tend to be supported by the extended family, even if one should take into consideration that families tend to function initially somehow disconnected because they look for a natural way of individualization and autonomy with respect to the rest of the system. This situation changes dramatically when families have a child because, due to the mobility of the family system or the father, the extended family is included as part of the support network. This takes place especially when deprivation of liberty occurs because economic, social, moral, and emotional support is required, and alternative possibilities about the family imaginary are presented. This is reflected in the functional dialogue, where big questions seem to be hidden but are asked: What does it mean to be father, mother, son, grandson, grandfather? Also, in relation to how to be of support in everyday life in light of normative and non-normative crises such as deprivation of liberty.

The meaning of the crisis derived from deprivation of liberty for the families

As regards the experience and resignifying of the deprivation of liberty, the person is not deprived of liberty.

Hologrammatically, it is the family that is deprived of liberty or by the same token, has very limited liberty that is relative. As they are connected and share psychological, affective, social, and spiritual movements, they are also related and experienced together by means of family accounts, and alternative particular narratives that contradict family memories. They are faced in an adaptive way according to the cultural, communitarian, social, and political contexts, and their own family identity.

Therefore, this event can be understood in two different spheres, a factual one, where facts or events are narrated, and a meaningful one that builds the family system concerning the situation.

Thus, initially it is necessary to talk not exclusively of deprivation of liberty, but about the conflict with the law, and, at that time, about the “information” concerning the actions derived from service, and the civil norms or the military norms that are at stake within the context of the armed conflict in Colombia, that, even in the post-conflict stage, still represents a situation of great social, and family demand.

This corresponds to the fact that, from the very beginning of the action derived from service, the military, and to some extent his family, are informed formally or informally about the administrative process, and its possible implications. Even if there is a presumption of innocence, there are always high expectations regarding the results, as well as anguish. Furthermore, considering the time that it takes to solve such processes, there is some type of conditioning of liberty, or somehow limited or relative liberty, in which some routines by the children have to continue, such as going to mass, following orders

(by the father), and going to school. In case the wife works or if she’s dealing with everyday life, she’s always in anguish because of the ongoing process and its resolution.

Even if there is *information* about the process, the family takes a position about a positive resolution because the representation of the father/military, his honor, and values, are oriented to a feeling of hope that is eliminated by the shock produced by the *arrest warrant or the information*, according to which the military appears before the authorities. This experience is known as a *shock* because the father is detained by the military and civil authorities, and is taken into custody. This breaks the traditional scheme of honor, pride and value of authority in society so that it is considered precisely a process of trauma or fracture.

Moreover, if the anguish for the expectation is distanced in time, it is replaced by emotional detachment and negation concerning the true nature of this situation to the point of thinking that this is a temporary situation or even a mistake.

Besides the feeling of *negation* and *shame* on account of the arrest of the father, and by the situation itself, it is necessary to remember the meaning of honor, value, and pride of being military in the society. With the capture of the suspect, one goes to the opposite pole of humiliation, the least valuable, the feeling of shame. As one of the participants said: “He looked like a homeless person”.

Furthermore, concerning the process of deprivation, when the families experience that the father is in this situation, they consider it shocking not only

because of the transformation of his look but also because of the meaning of being “incarcerated”. This is a conception that is only related to “delinquents” and doesn’t correspond to someone in uniform. This generates sadness, pain, and fear to lose their rights and their prestige because they do not know what is going to happen to them after the deprivation of liberty.

This situation can generate detachment from the construction of their life projects such as buying a house, a vehicle, or metaphorically speaking, they feel that they are not the owners of their family, individual, and professional projects.

One should underline that one additional consequence concerns the effect on economic income, and the way they will satisfy the needs of the family members. Additionally, there is an increase in family expenditure because they have to pay lawyers, and they do not have military discounts because their father has been *accused or sentenced*. In this case, the wife or the extended nuclear family should assume additional activities that allow them to supply for such demands. This represents an overload of activities that generate resources, the neglect or delegation of activities related to children’s upbringing, and parental control, the overlapping roles and responsibilities in the extended families.

In these cases, the mother is the one that has to assume now greater prominence than previously, or even before the deprivation of liberty occurred. She becomes a relativized or deficient version of the father, and an antagonist of the meanings of the father and mother, i.e., a version of the mother as an authority, limit, and norm enforcer. In other words, she

becomes the *villain*, and now the father becomes the *victim*, the *effective container*, and, as much as possible, the figure of *permissiveness*. All this is represented affectively as *guilt* and *overcompensation* by the father; anguish, saturation, and discomfort by the mother. There are also adaptive changes by the children such as emotional and behavioral problems.

Resilient resources in light of deprivation of liberty

Concerning the resilient resources in military families, one can observe how the transformation of identity and family dynamics facilitate the emergence of family resilience. As regards the communication, structure, and roles, the military families with deprivation of liberty changed. They display now higher family cohesion even in the extended family. They have the feeling that they are not alone to face adversity, but there is cooperation in everyday tasks; even in the resolution of problems of children upbringing, the parental care and control, and generativity, understood as creative ways to acquire resources to satisfy economic and affective needs, as well as social support.

With regard to roles, the mothers considered that they were crucial inside the family organization. They are now perceived as the center of all responsibilities, which represents more anguish and fatigue. They are empowered and their role is seen as one of support and leadership; now they experience being of more esteem, and confidence. This is perceived not only by the family, but also by their partners to the extent that now they have

become models of tolerance, strength, and righteousness. This also facilitates the rediscovery of their identities in the couple or, in other words, the strengthening of the marital relationship as well as the bond with their children.

Such repositioning was extended to other family systems, generating support networks, and cooperation with families who were in a similar phase or were initiating a process of deprivation of liberty. This could translate into better alternatives to obtain resources to satisfy needs, emotional support, or providing information to handle the legal process.

In terms of their relationships and family identity, one can observe that even if there is a boundary between the nuclear and the extended family, which is common in consolidating and differentiating families, deprivation of liberty facilitated its resignifying so that now it is not conceived as an extension controlled by the extended family, but as a support network that helps to cope with adversity without alienating their identity.

This transformation in the identity and functioning of families allowed for the emergence of resources such as resignifying crises due to deprivation to the point that it could be conceived as proof of their identity structure as well as the discovery of family values connected to empathy, attitude, endurance, and hope with a more realistic perception of the process, and of the family therein, as well as self-knowledge. This would be equivalent to measure their limits concerning the coping or deploying in diverse situations, the ability to establish a close connection, the experience of love and consideration, improvement despite the deprivation of liberty,

communication, and active hearing in order to transcend functional dialogues.

Moreover, in these families, one can observe the ability to adapt creatively to adversity, for example by focusing their attention on enjoying the spaces for connection and enjoyment, initially described, that are limited in everyday missionary work. Here they can be perceived as games, dinner, and conversational spaces even in the place of deprivation of liberty.

Additionally, to trust each other and their own resources facilitates a positive attitude, sense of humor, creativity, collaboration, commitment, and especially emotional self-regulation, having the ability to cope with difficulties or crises without victimhood, thereby weakening negative emotional responses.

Discussion and conclusions

Concerning the crisis derived from experiencing an adverse event of deprivation of liberty, two aspects can be highlighted. First, it can be considered as a mourning situation (Greeff, & Van der Walt 2010). Second, deprivation of liberty can be strengthened or weakened according to aspects connected to military rank, educational level of the family, the partner and her job, and the family identity. The latter may represent by itself a resilient identity, by spirituality, emotional self-regulation, the ability to find parallel generative narratives to adversity, and the social-affective support. Some

differences were also found between the families that could cope better with adversity and had such conditions because they acted as support.

At the same time, and regarding the crisis derived from deprivation of liberty, one could observe that in line with the studies by Chapin (2011); Lester et al. (2010); Paley, Lester & Mogil (2013) and MacDermid (2010), there is a bigger perception of crisis or shock due to the mobility. This is connected to the missionary work of the military, or the deployment derived from actions of public order or war because phenomena such as difficulties to adapt, family dysfunction, psychological adjustment, and mental health disorders are also observed (Riggs & Riggs, 2011).

This allows us to conclude that families respond better to deprivation of liberty than to mobility or deployment (McCubbin & McCubbin, 2013; Seidl, Lurdes, Benetti, & Pereira, 2011).

It also implies the urgent need to generate working plans oriented to mitigating these effects within the framework of resilience because the benefit can be observed in terms of family functioning, coping with adversity, improvement of mental health, and the positive and resilient ecological relation with other family or communitarian systems (Gottman, Gottman & Atkins, 2011; Paley et al., 2013).

One could also confirm that resilience is a quality that one learns and to some extent inherits (Bradley et al., 2013). It develops in the most adverse conditions and under non-facilitating social communitarian environments. It also results from an emergent competency, derived precisely from the network of the relationships with

tutors or communities and family identities with such characteristics.

This should be complemented in the sense that even if, from the individual perspective, the support can be seen as a mentor, here it could be understood as support networks through which one can facilitate the deployment of resilience. It can correspond to the development of alternative narratives of the adverse event, the transformation of the family identity, the improvement of communication and its meanings. Even without access to TICS, new connections can be created in relation to cooperation, support and creativity, the development of a positive and hopeful attitude, family self-esteem and self-confidence, self-regulation, and family generativity.

Specifically, in terms of exposure to non-facilitating environments or contexts, or in the case of existence of deficient family systems, family resilience can be deployed because adverse events, traumas or vulnerability conditions produce generative connecting movements as long as there are basic conditions such as support, cohesion, spirituality, and educational bases. It should be noted that this exercise can be optimized if policies and institutional actions per se are developed and their ecosystem actions (Bronfenbrenner, 1987) facilitate communitarian environments, even if they can be developed naturally, by working as support (Distelberg & Taylor, 2015; Juliano & Yunes, 2014) and implementing resilient resources.

In the case of the military families, one could observe the recognition of resilient resources by FWMNA through the functioning of the Family Centers at the

national level. They carry out the Program for the Military Deprived of Liberty and their Families that becomes an additional support network that facilitates the discovery of resources to overcome the crisis and soothe the feeling of abandonment experienced by families.

As regards the ecosystem actions and back-actions, one can observe a dyadic relationship that promotes generativity between the nuclear and the extended family as long as individuation and differentiation of the extended family occur, even by showing rigid limits; however, when the adverse event takes place, they become permeable without destroying their identity and facilitating the deployment of resilience.

The study presents limitations of methodological order. Despite having easy access to the participants, because they have relative deprived of liberty, the eventual mobility of the family, (some move to accompany their family member) made it difficult to have an agile contact with them. Another limitation arose from the impact it represents for them to talk about a situation that represents great pain.

Possibilities and challenges that arise from this study can be highlighted. It represents a starting point for the design and subsequent implementation of resilience-oriented programs by the DIFAB of the National Army and their extension to other Forces such as the Navy, Air Force and National Police.

On the other hand, in the post-conflict scenario, the need to promote research not only of resilience in a descriptive sense, but of family resilience is highlighted.

For, as described in the introduction, the families of all victims of the armed conflict would benefit from understanding and appropriating these resources. Another potential benefit arises from an opportunity of co-responsibility of all the actors to develop programs oriented towards the promotion of family resilience.

Likewise, there is concern about how collateral effects of the conflict can significantly affect families, accentuating pain and affecting their quality of life, well-being and health. These effects would constitute a similar adverse situation or one of greater impact to the armed conflict.

The National Army will benefit from this study, taking into account the findings of the exploration of resilient resources, not only in all its members and their respective families, but also in which situations they are resilient. In this way it will be easier for the National Army and on their behalf the Family and Welfare Directorate, to fulfill its mission.

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