

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: Analysis of an Inquiry-Intervention of their Experiences

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Abstract

In Colombia, there is significant family instability due to social, economic, and political factors, which make grandparents on many occasions, the last hope of survival and care for children. The present work focused on the experience of grandparents raising children, from their voice and considering their contextual conditions. At the same time as the subject was investigated, a learning discussion group was created. The analysis presents significant aspects of the parenting experience of these grandparents while offering insight into the complexity of their perspectives. The results indicate how grandparents make sense of their task as caregivers for their grandchildren.

Key Words: *Grandparents, grandchildren, contextual conditions, content analysis, complex perspective.*

Introduction

The increasing assistance of grandparents taking care of grandchildren is a phenomenon quite present in many places (Klein, 2010). Studies on this subject focus mainly on grandparents - grandchildren relationships and describe different situational factors for grandparents as well as factors concerning family intergenerational interactions (Kelling, 2012; Klein & García, 2016; Coelho & Dias, 2016). Several studies point factors that require attention such as age and health conditions (Triadó, et al 2008). Other studies show the value and challenges of caregiving for grandparents and grandchildren, especially in developed countries (Badenes & López, 2011). These first reviews show that many studies conducted on the elderly and grandparents refer to demographic changes, especially in industrialized countries in which there is a growing ageing population (Pinazo & Montoro, 2004). This situation amplifies the grandparents' possibilities of participation in the family environment and an increased opportunity for intergenerational interactions. Other studies on the subject emphasize specific aspects of the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren, such as preferences between them, routines performed, and reasons for assuming the task of parenting (Klein, Basilio, & García, 2016; Coelho & Dias, 2016). These are quantitative studies generally carried out through the administration of questionnaires and statistical analysis.

However, despite the research efforts on this subject, most studies confirm the descriptive results of other studies (Keeling, 2012) and establish the need of ongoing investigations (Pinazo & Montoro, 2004). Also, a review of the literature illustrates that the research methods and instruments employed do not attempt to gather first-person experiences and, therefore, omit the fullest voice of the participants and the opportunity to learn not only about researchers' aims but to allow the participants to share experiences, motivations and interests. These other aims imply considering alternatives to the typical, structured and pre-established instruments, such as questionnaires or other types of surveys.

In the Colombian context, a study by Durán and Valoyes (2009) shows that Colombia's population faces numerous risks of interruption or lack of parental care: poverty, displacement, migration, natural disasters, armed conflict, disability, family violence. These conditions have led several researchers to ask about other family ties that could mitigate situations where parents are unable to raise their children. In Bogotá, García and Guerrero (2014), conducted a study on the role of grandparents in the education of their grandchildren. The researchers found new relational conflicts, however, they suggested that grandparents have always provided an opportunity for the survival and safety of children. Also, in my practice as Javeriana University Professor, I observed the growing presence of grandparents as guardians responsible for their grandchildren, facilitating not only the care of the grandchildren but the work and financial contribution of the family group. I wondered about the meaning of this experience for grandparents and the relation of these meanings to the conditions of the context they live.

Given the above concerns, I initiated a series of dialogue groups seven years ago with grandparents. Each discussion group started with the same question: How has the experience of being grandparents been for you? My assumption is that inquiry (such as this) is intervention. I present the content analysis of one dialogue group of grandparents taking care of grandchildren, using postmodern ideas (Shotter, 2012) and complexity thinking approaches (Martínez, 2011).

Literature Review

My literature review examines research concerning the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren, establishing objectives, methodologies and results. The keywords used were the grandparents-grandchildren relationship, quantitative methods, qualitative methods. The objective was to have a general view of the research conducted on this topic of grandparents caring for their grandchildren. Additionally, I was interested in exploring what issues might benefit from new research and alternative methodological approaches. Journal articles presented in Dialnet, Cielo, Redalyc, Google Scholar and Jstor were considered, due to the accessibility of the documents and the fact that the first three databases favor the Latin American context research. Fifteen articles, published between 2004 and 2017, were selected on the specific topic of grandparents raising grandchildren, thoroughly read and organized chronologically according to the methodologies presented, highlighting objectives and results.

Researchers generally state that grandchildren prefer the grandmother and grandfather of the maternal line (Pinazo & Montoro, 2004; Klein, Basilio & García, 2016; González, González, Ortiz & González, 2010; Coelho & Dias, 2016). The articles described the quality of the grandparents-grandchildren relationship depending on the frequency of contact between them, the closeness between grandparents and parents, activities such as walking, talking, playing, looking at pictures and talking about memories as well as the perception that grandchildren have of their grandparents as teachers and caregivers (Pinazo & Montoro, 2004; Keeling, 2012; Klein, Basilio & García, 2016; Coelho & Dias, 2016).

In a systematic review of research between 2004-2014 (Coelho & Dias, 2016), report the reasons for taking on the task of caring for grandchildren. The most cited reasons were divorce, abandonment, substance abuse, and death of one of the parents of the grandchildren. In turn, they recognized that the repercussions of caretaking include, among others, the increase in expenses,

the exercise of authority, and the establishment of behavioral norms, especially when the grandchildren reach adolescence.

The review of qualitative research focuses on grandparents raising grandchildren and grandparent-grandchildren relationships. In these studies, new categories of research emerged, including values, reasons for grandparenting, forms of relations among grandparents and grandchildren, the meaning of a grandparent's life, and financial repercussions or the costs of caring for grandchildren. However, most of the results are descriptive. Only two more interpretative articles go further, offering descriptions that construct a new relational scenario (Moreno & Sandoval, 2015; Gañán & Neira, 2017).

Quirós and Guerra (2011) found that grandparents have the social responsibility of being the transmitters of traditional values, which in turn produces contradictions and tensions in the relationship with grandchildren. Martín-Rengifo and Palacio-Valencia (2015) found this same role of the intergenerational link and also notes the transformations in the parental functions and the changes in the family dynamics, which, again, are not exempt from emotional, authority, and even legal tensions.

For their part, Moreno and Sandoval (2015) found that despite different testimonies, there is intergenerational solidarity among women, based on the similar experience of the absence of support while assuming motherhood roles and responsibilities. The study indicated that when biological mothers had the help of their mothers, intergenerational gratitude was implied. They also found that care is an entirely women's task, an issue related to the difficulty of establishing separation in the roles of women, mothers, and grandmothers.

Gañán and Molina (2017), in a study with migrant grandmothers in Ecuador, found a value they called, "family morality and reciprocity." Caring for the grandchildren of mothers who migrate becomes a sign of the cultural value of solidarity and reciprocity, even though frequently the obligation does not have the hope of being compensated in the future and goes with economic overload, cost to physical health, with conditions of loneliness and lack of communication. The obligation to accept the delegation of care is merely given.

Other investigators have reported the impact of grandparent care of grandchildren on the appearance of new conflicts and tensions (Quirós & Guerra, 2004), differences concerning authority (García & Guerrero, 2014), the feeling of having lost "something" (Moreno & Sandoval, 2015), and emotional dilemmas and intergenerational conflicts (Rengifo & Valencia, 2015). All these investigations show the paradoxical and complex condition that this function has since it is simultaneously seen as an opportunity to enjoy the grandchildren (Moreno & Sandoval, 2015) and as an experience to repair previous experiences and to have new ones (Marín-Rengifo & Palacio-Valencia, 2015).

In this way, the narratives found in qualitative research talk about specific people in specific situations. They collected, analyzed and ordered their voices and their experiences. The logic of qualitative research is inductive and descriptive, and its results not intended to be generalizable or verifiable but useful in the circumstances in which they are generated. The qualitative research information offers perspectives, points of view, narrations, feelings, and learnings which allude to the person's life. These kinds of results allow some models of qualitative research to go beyond

the description. An example can be seen in Gañan and Neira's work (2017) in which the authors propose relational concepts that point to forms of family interaction, while also offering critical, ethical considerations and values for the context of their work.

In this review of the literature, I did not find any research reports guided by the action research methodology, nor that feedback between researcher and participants was relevant. It is precisely this lack of collaborative impact among all participants that hinders the development of methodologies that aim to enrich participants and researchers. On the other hand, almost all research reports do not offer explicit mention of the relationship between the context of grandparents' and grandchildren's lives. These gaps also offer an opportunity to investigate whether or not there is a connection between different psychosocial conditions and grandparents' function.

This review of literature illustrates the curiosity of other researchers and offers recognition of the value of their work. This body of research allowed me to identify consonances of voices, hypotheses, and explorations which make this work not only an exploration but a process of learning through continuous and exciting conversations. The literature review also showed some gaps in methodologies and the questions that open my proposal, specifically, methods offering visibility to the experiences and needs of grandparents while simultaneously contributing to the opportunity to jointly advance their understanding.

Aims

Considering the above, the analysis of the group conversation material aims to achieve the following:

1. To explore the meaning of the task of being grandparents for those who participated in three grandparent groups of different psychosocial contexts.
2. To explore the links between the various ways and meanings of being grandparents, seeing the psychosocial contextual conditions of the grandparent group.

Methodological Metaphor: "it makes its way by walking"

This inquiry is a commitment to create a fruitful analytic approach based on "experience." The concept of experience has very early origins in the history of Western thought. It is a constituent element of the subject/person, which offers the conditions for openness to the world and the realization of new experiences (Kant, 1975, quoting in Amengual, 2007).

The present analysis of an inquiry-intervention, as an emerging investigative paradigm, assumes complexity of realities and the social and fluid nature of facts. Morin's work (Morin, 1981, quoting in Martínez, 2011), says that reality is as a complex fabric that is heterogeneous with paradoxical relations, multiple units, and uncertainty, and therefore an unpredictable process. This approach allows the emergence and recognition of aspects not present in the isolated points. This new rationality requires (a) procedures gathering knowledge from different sources; (b) integrating elements usually considered contrary, such as the psychic/social, rational/emotional/aesthetic, and object/subject; (c) observation and intuition. All of which implies high flexibility and openness.

Susa (2009) proposes a view of reality as processes of research-professional intervention from the perspective of complex thinking, it is possible to build scenarios in which conversations and relationships arise new realities. That is, realities are constructed with the other. This inquiry-intervention methodology begins with the conception that knowledge is constructed in social interaction implying shared meanings and process of self- reflection (Torres, et al., 2008).

The record of dialogues among grandparents of the present analysis came from an inquiry-intervention methodology, beginning with the question about the grandparents' experience, but moved towards their interests and concerns. Over fixed protocols, principles guided this dialogue dynamic. The creation and maintenance of the conversational process requires generous flexibility, imagination and tolerance for uncertainty.

Analysis of the Dialogues

This project assumes the analysis of the stories and the experiences of the dialogues among grandparents, considering phenomenological and hermeneutic perspectives, in which the gaze of the "thing itself" converges with the understanding of the historicity and linguistic nature of "being", the intersubjective relations, the emergence of meaning, the intuition of the not evident, leading to approximations, integrations or multiple units of meaning (Barbera & Inciarte, 2012).

For Fernández, (2002), content analysis is a technique conceived as a set of procedures that aim the production of analytical meta-text representing the textual corpus in a transformed way (...) Or, in other words, it has to be conceived as a procedure designed to destabilize the immediate intelligibility of the textual surface, showing aspects that are not directly intuitive and yet present.

First-order analysis: The aim is to review the conversational process itself and its movement considering ideas, themes, and feelings. From this first analysis, categories emerged illustrating the transformation or movement of the participants' ideas during the group session.

Second-order analysis: The second step is more interpretative. I established relationships between the session's content and other aspects. These constructions also included the conditions of context in which the grandparents live, as they describe them, and my observations and synthesis of public information from municipal assessments. This work led to further interpretations. The value of this process is to generate comprehensive hypotheses the draw upon emerging knowledge and understanding, which were not foreseen before or during the interview and observation process. The emerging elements demand a new literature review.

Method of the Analysis of the Inquiry-Intervention

The inquiry-intervention is an emerging type of methodology that points towards transformation; it requires that the methodology must be adjusted step-by-step depending on the conversational process. Some steps of this inquiry can be sketched, corresponding with what McNamee and Hosking (2012) propose as orientating subjects in the development of transforming inquiries. I completed steps 1 to 4 as an Associate Professor at Javeriana University. Steps 5 through 7 correspond to the present analysis of the intervention - investigating materials, in light of the Canterbury Christ Church University PhD Program like Ph.D. in Professional Practice: Psychological Perspectives. They are described as follows:

1. Participant recruit: The group was from the school where I worked coordinating clinical practices of the university and had 2 to 8 participants, I had two conversation meetings- Establishing the place, time and conditions of the conversations required a lot of flexibility and patience with schedules and cancellations.
2. In preparing the meeting, I organized some materials like paper, pencils, colors to facilitate the storytelling. The dialogue began with the initial question: "How has the experience of being grandparents for you?" The development of each encounter depended on the participants' narratives and what caught my attention and curiosity.
3. Documentation (data). The meetings were documented by taking notes during the sessions and/or by audio recordings, depending on the participant's choice and their permission. After the meeting, I also registered my experiences, before, during, and after work sessions in my field notebook. It included the verbal content, observations, and the emotional experience of the participants and as well as my own.
4. New literature review: I conducted an updated review of the literature on the topic of grandparents raising grandchildren.
5. The first step of content analysis: The objective of this first step analysis was to organize the records of each conversation session and establish the rhythm or movement of the conversation. This step of the analysis allowed me to identify descriptive categories and the content of each of these categories. In addition, I charted the transformation or movement of the participants' ideas during the group session.
6. The second step of content analysis: The second phase was interpretative in nature. I established relationships between the session's content as a whole with other aspects, especially the connection of emerging categories and context characteristics and the records of my observations during the dialogue processes.
7. New literature review to expand the meaning of the emerging comprehensions.

Findings

First Analysis Moment: Meaning of the Task of Being Grandparents: "Hard Grandmas"

From the beginning of the first work session, the participants name themselves as "brave - hard grandmothers". This nomination is a definition of their condition as grandmothers and became the central axis of the conversation to other displayed topics. "Hard" for them is related to offered firm limits, forcing parents also to assume their parenting responsibility. These women had, and continue being as, the authority in the family they formed. Their role is performed with firmness and conviction. They recognized mutual help conditions in this current relationship with their children, but that it does not change their hierarchical place. The movement of a particular ideas to a central notion - hard grandmothers - is justified because the word "hard" parses and summons the other elements presented in the conversation.

Very soon in the dialogue the reference to the "neighborhood" appears. It is described as a place of nameless violence, vice, murder, misguided youth, risks of many kinds, abandonment of

children and parents who do not know how to set limits on children's behaviors. The grandmothers' function is the continuity of parenting that requires a strong arm that holds, guides, controls and orders family life, as the best way to prevent grandchildren from losing their life or ending up in crime. The firm hand that they claim they must assume is the fundamental thing; it includes strong norms and punishments, even physical discipline. For the participants, permissiveness with parents that do assume their responsibilities is a central problem that leads to social vagrancy.

The above revolves around the strict norm as a protective factor, which diverges from academic, legal and institutional policies and positions about the physical punishment of children. Contrary to the custom and beliefs of the grandmothers, academic, legal instances and childcare institutions avoid and prohibit physical punishment, making the grandmothers' proposition a measure to promote care and prevent child abuse.

At the second meeting, I had 6 new participants, two men and four women. The conversation flowed freely, and the interventions I made were aimed at modulating the answers offered, repeating a word used and delving into some issues. The grandparents who take care of their grandchildren are motivated by collaboration and the payment they get from the parents. This income represents an essential help for grandparents, joined to other income from small tasks, business or retirement pension.

After establishing that each one takes care of 1 to 4 grandchildren, the conversation focused on norms, discipline and forms of correction needed with the grandchildren. According to the group, it is necessary to "walk them hard," as if they were "dealing with donkeys." Grandchildren are "tremendous", so the slogan "bread and whip" lead grandchildren to the right track. It is necessary not to lose sight of them. They ensure that current thoughts about discipline leave parents with no authority or correction tools, and with the threat of legal complaint from the children themselves. Grandmothers claim that they do not allow or accept threat and, on the contrary, "have to be tough."

The conversation moves toward the topic of young people today, a problematic issue for grandparents. They said young people had changed a lot. Now, they are rude, "they are hooligans, they ignore their grandparents, get tattooed and do not take the advice offered by their grandparents". For them, these young people "get out of hand" of the parents who could not accompany them properly, because they left them alone, either by occupation or negligence. These negative and prejudiced views towards the young generation guides the grandparents to take care of their grandchildren in a disciplined way so that they can grow up to be competent. The look of the grandparents is centered on children's and young people's failures. Only later, when they talked about the youth of the neighborhood, could the grandparents make distinctions between them, establishing that their grandchildren are "great."

"Bread and grill" is the principle that governs this care. The grandmothers say they give them love with food, giving them pleasure in what they like, helping them and demanding to keep their things in order, taking them out for a walk or playing with them on Sundays, taking care of their uniforms and their clothes. In general, affection is centered on food as a significant value and in that physical care, personal presentation and order.

This grandparents' way of caring does not correspond to the way parents take care of themselves, which produces a double model, and often conflicts especially with the daughter-in-law. References to the daughter-in-law, mother of the grandchildren, are cause for complaint because she does not set a good example. She does not attend to them properly, is not present. It is clear that rivaling relationships are built especially between women (grandmothers, daughters-in-law), a situation of contradiction that favors "fights" or, to avoid them, it is better to "close your mouth".

Grandparents recognize that grandchildren tend to complain to parents about their requirements or some inflicted punishment. These complaints lead to disobedience by the children and may lose parental support. Grandparents said that it is easier to reach agreements with parents about norms and, therefore, the relationship tends to be good.

The "Barrio" is once again a crucial scenario, although it is clear that they avoid making specific references. However, "many things happen," hidden things, the law of silence to avoid putting yourself at risk, not to get into matters that are not yours. In other words, it is the personal-family environment in which it is possible to implement actions, norms and forms of punishment so that things go as expected.

I invited them to remember their education as children. Discussing the tools for discipline and teaching, they remembered methods used by parents, teachers and nuns: leash, ruler, do dirty work, knees carrying bricks. They were beaten for everything, even for not knowing the lesson. Punishments at that time produced fear and terror but also taught them to respect and appreciate life. Today, they think these traumas are history. Now, grandparents use some other methods, such as dialogue, reprimand, making them realize what is wrong, being able to say no. Also, they give fists, pinch them, take away food they like to eat, ignore them, not talk to them, take away the television, but above all be attentive, present and repeat the same things many times. In general, they try to infuse what they were taught, but parents have another way of raising them.

Finally, the conversation closes stating grandparent's expectation for grandchildren: to move forward, not be rude, not tell lies, not to be spoiled, respect others, to have an education that prevents crime, to support them, collaborate, above all, respect themselves. These ideals and their act committed to them is a field in which meetings between the different parenting models can be found and recognized. Grandparents find this conversation useful because they let off steam, meet and learn from each other while having a good time.

Links between the ways and meanings of being grandparents and life context conditions.

To achieve the aim of establishing links between the meaning of grandparents' tasks and the context of life, I used three contextual dimensions:

1. Official reports on the neighborhood and the concept of territory
2. The grandparents' family report
3. Personal experiences about the neighborhood, derived from the stories of the grandparents and the lived experience of the researcher.

A brief report about the Locality:

In the 2017 Monograph of the locality carried out by the District Secretariat of the city of Bogotá, it was shown that there is a decrease in violence in Ciudad Bolívar. However, Ciudad Bolívar continues to show a very problematic picture with the quality of housing and with indicators of violence. This report shows that, although Ciudad Bolívar has the birth rate of men and women among the universal ranks, male mortality increases after 15 years of age due to violence from different sources. Homicide cases have decreased year by year but continue to show a worrisome number, going from 357 in 2014 to 309 in 2017. Reports indicate that there were 26,817 cases of violence against women in 2017. Most of this violence occurs in the couple (10,500 cases), followed by interpersonal (8,590) and sexual offence (3,534). Ciudad Bolívar brings together a story of uprooted peasants, poor settlers who found opportunities in the illegality of land grabs, and displaced people from different backgrounds. Also, it has been the territory of armed actors and conflicts between them, proliferation of crimes such as drug trafficking and control of the territory struggles, with scarce educational and labor opportunities (Secretaría Distrital de Bogotá, 2017).

Grandparents family history:

As the grandparent told during our meeting, the tools for discipline and teaching, the methods used by parents, teachers and nuns included using a leash or ruler, doing dirty work, down on the knees carrying bricks. To be beaten for everything was standard in the educational context. Even punishments at that time produced fear and terror; they learned to respect the elders and appreciate life. Today, they think these traumas are history.

Personal experience with the locality:

One of the first painful experiences I faced as a supervisor of psychology students in 2005 was the fact that 30% of students in elementary grades reported having witnessed a violent death or having relatives who had suffered a violent death.

Second Analysis Moment: Conceptual resonances and hermeneutical approaches

1. Parenting complex phenomenon:

The narrations wove the current situation of the context, the intersubjective, the history of the inhabitants and the conflicts from simultaneous relational dynamics of contemporary or more traditional forms or models of life. Both become strange and contradictory at the same time, which requires transactions, agreements and coexistence strategies. The following fabric became more involved during the grandparents' group. That is to say, "Bread and Whip" education results in an emergent phenomenon of the crossing of historical moments, of diverse living conditions, that summon evaluations, situations, affects and experiences in processes and conflicts.

On the other hand, child-care has been the subject and the scene of multiple discourses: disciplinary, public sectors (such as education, health, social sciences), and areas of public policy working on modifying and punishing problematic behaviors of those responsible for the upbringing. These legal, psycho-educational, health officials, social assistance and psychological approaches, among many others, are generally organized without consideration by the socio-cultural and historical forces present in each place where parenting takes place.

As Peñaranda (2011) claims, the actions to abolish physical punishment end in the imposition of meanings carried out in a decontextualized manner and therefore do not correspond to the needs and concerns of those to whom they are oriented. Instead, they correspond to conceptions about what a healthy child is or should be, what should be done as parents or caregivers of children, what is a right or wrong practice, based on family ideals and different socio-cultural contexts, making these indications impositions, legitimized by scientific knowledge and legal provisions that favor prosecution or diagnosis, ignoring the value or understanding of practices of childcare. It generates, as in the case presented, tensions and reactions of resistance; also, in the case of young fathers and mothers, confusion and ambivalence with their history, knowledge and their criteria.

Peñaranda (2011) points out, in contrast to the above, that meaning construction, in this case on parenting, is a dialectical process of socialization-individuation, which the vital experience of being a mother or father, constitutes a reference central because the upbringing is constituted as a historical, sociocultural and ontological complex.

In this sense, the meaning of the experience of being grandparents emerges from their lives and conditions of existence, combining their personal, relational and trans-generational history, organized now in the present. In this way, "Hard Grandma" and "Bread and Whip" were used as selected practices, offering organization to the stories of grandparents about the task of caring for grandchildren. In this way, a richer network of meanings emerges, expanded in the course of the conversation. The diverse-unity of ideas in the dialogue created an atmosphere of greater understanding in the group. In turn, a very significant movement emerged in my way of thinking and understanding some ideas considered invariant from my personal and professional conception. I began to imagine letting go of the tradition of teaching precepts or correct behaviors to instead favoring emergence of moments that can continue creating movements in support of the "Good life" of all those who participate in the work.

2. From the "neighborhood" to the "territory":

For the participants, the "neighborhood" is a central place of the interactions between grandparents-parents-grandchildren. In this context, grandparents clearly defined their position with grandchildren as rigid strength, a way of barricading between them and outside the street. The barricade emerges from the combination of factors, and in this case from the psychosocial history of the neighborhood, combined with their personal stories of being uprooted poor peasants, in patriarchal parenting models and to the fact that many of the female grandmothers were heads of their households for different reasons.

In this sense, the concept of territory broadens the understanding of "Hard Grandparents" and "Bread and Whip" as united categories of care provided by the grandparents of Ciudad Bolívar. Llanos-Hernández (2010) said that territory is an empirical reference and, at the same time, a theoretical and methodological concept that explains and describes the spatial development of the social relationships established by humans in cultural, social, political and economic fields. According to the author, the concept of territory arises from critical geographical thinking characterized by welcoming diverse ways of thinking and interpreting, given the conception of volatile events. In his words, the territory helps the interpretation and understanding of social relations linked to the spatial dimension; it contains the social practices and symbolic senses that

humans develop in society in an intimate relationship with nature. Some change fleetingly, but others remain attached in the time and space of a society. The concept refers to empirical elements of reality. Still, it is also an organizing concept that shapes the particular link that occurs between social action and the natural-geographical and cultural environment.

This notion of territory requires, in the face of such essential actions as the promotion of health, the good life or proper treatment and the recognition of the context-territory with the adaptation forms or inhabitant solutions to concrete problems of daily life. In the case of Ciudad Bolívar, ignoring the significant challenges of subsistence, violence and crime leads to errors and prejudices that ignore the impact that these factors have on the vital balance that the inhabitants have achieved. On the contrary, the recognition and exploration of the resources and strategies of inhabitant survival open the possibility of enriching the understanding and solutions that are considered to confront the challenges.

In this territory, the law of silence means preservation of life. Not speaking, not looking, not saying are implicit codes when a population feels prey to terror. The stories show that the people have developed as a defense these codes together with a specific manifestation of indifference, concretized in "each one has to take care and save himself as best he can." Solidarity to take care of yourself can be dangerous, that's why it's better to shut up.

3. From the Patriarchy to the Matriarchy?

Striking elements of the stories refer to the ways of upbringing lived in the original family of the grandparents. At that time, children were subjected to "immediate obedience" and physical punishment that "broke the body". These were a common custom in certain social groups, in this case, poor peasants; the power, domination and control were essential elements, undoubtedly exercised by a male head of the family, who subordinated all the other members of the family. Children were considered above all necessary to work in the fields, far removed from the contemporary conception of the infant, and their domination and control guaranteed with the use of force, the threat of harm, very frequently present.

The family women were also dominated by the patriarchal and had a subordinated place to domestic tasks. Their value was even more precarious than their male brothers, placing in the last position of the family organization and being the receptacle of submission and violence from all males in the group. This situation necessarily relegated women to a permanent dependence and subordination; a condition continued after they run from the patriarchal family to construct their own family life. The case described implies not only a series of particular events experienced but the woman place and destiny socially configured in an effective way. Women are subjected to this ideological and transgenerational transmission, and in many cases, they can only repeat and sustain the patriarchal model with their children.

For Arriazu (2000), the patriarchal configuration power is the origin of domestic violence and is a product not only of family units, victims and perpetrators but also supported by socio-cultural organizations and material and ideological factors. However, Pachón (2007) states that the increase in family violence is notorious from the end of the 20th century, with the breakdown of the patriarchal power structure. It meant changes in the family organization, new family tensions, especially with the presence of new members, the instability of the family configuration and

demands of overload on women, now heads of the household. The author recognizes in this transformation also the construction of more equal and collaborative relationships between family members, higher levels of schooling and the insertion of women into the labor market. This last aspect allowed women to be the economic provider of their home, often fulfilling the traditional functions of the home traditionally assigned to them.

Pachón states that parallel to these changes, women's headship began to be widely configured in the population, with or without the presence of the spouse, or with the presence of occasional partners, often motivated by economic precariousness. This situation led to seek support from the extended family for care, especially in homes belonging to unprotected socioeconomic sectors and in women with subordinate occupations. The origin family is generally the place they turn to, leading the elderly parents to take up the parenting task they believed completed, leading to an overload of work, but at the same time offering survival conditions mutual between different generations.

According to Serrano and Rodríguez (2005) the concept of Matriarchy or Gynecocracy has a historical journey from ancient times in which it has changed its meaning. In ancient Egypt, it referred to the reversal of gender roles and the governance of women. However, for Bachofen, cited by the authors, the patriarchy and matriarchy systems were related to opposite characteristics, not only about the power exercised but especially on thought evolution. The matriarchy is characterized by mythical thought and worship of spirits and demons, in which the wild, primal instincts predominate, the myths, all of which are related to Irrationality. Its counterpart, the patriarchal system is described by a higher social order, dominated by reason, rationality, and knowledge. Bachofen quotes that hordes of primitive humanity, men and women were mixed at first, obeying whim and occasion. The paternal family of our days did not exist; rather, promiscuity produced the maternal family; as paternity was unknown or uncertain, while maternity was documented in the evidence of childbirth. (Bachofen, 1987, quoting in Muñoz & Rodríguez, 2005.)

The authors above criticize Bachofen's proposals, questioning the universal model described as a historical tradition of all human groups and not only of the ancient Mediterranean world. On the other hand, they allude to the moralistic, normative and evolutionary implications present in Bachofen's text, typical of the thought of the time, in which cultural values and the projection of negative values on the feminine. In contrast, the authors collect the myth value as a collective experience that justifies and contains a significant events explanation for human groups. It places the feminine and its power as a source of social organization, or on the contrary, of obedience, subordination and demands for certain qualities that make up the feminine. Finally, the authors establish that the women from the power spheres in patriarchal societies are carried out not because of their biological conditions, but because of moral weakness, which justifies male dominance. They also draw attention to the location of women in the place of a goddess or eternal minor are categories that limit the development of women as a full individual with virtues and defects and prevent her from achieving an active socio-political status.

Returning to the group of grandparents in the present work, all of them report domination, violence and submission experienced in their original family and later replicated in the homes they formed with their husbands. These relationships patterns can be considered as a guideline updated in their homes and a relational resource, now used in the current situation with their daughters and

grandchildren, as a barrier of containment and protection against chaos and danger lived. Grandmothers are now Matriarchs, condensing the harsh family experiences from the past and the social conditions of danger and death present in the social environment.

The previous reflections with authors from different disciplines create thought movements that expand understandings that reveal the naivety of considering unique frames of reference. Here we can see the role and limitation of the concepts assumed as immobile realities or by precepts, and the high mobility that they can acquire when they are recursively contrasting elements of analysis. After this reflection on the grandparents of *Sabio Caldas*, I see movements and historical condensations of many sources present at a particular moment. Leaving judgments, allowed me to understand the barricade between the dangerous and violent outside world and the grandchildren. They create this solution with historical, personal and interpersonal resources they have.

To finish, I would like to return to a phrase found in Arriazú's text, quoting Lie Wiesel that to be belligerent in the face of atrocities, because neutrality does not favor the oppressed, but the oppressor and silence stimulate the executioner, not the victim.

(Wiesel, n.d., quoting in Arriazu, 2000)

Reflections

The work carried out with the grandparents is a sample of understanding attending the interaction of factors present in a particular problem area. Although I found common themes present in most of the studies reviewed during the meetings with the grandparents, their interaction and organization at various levels of the analysis show new aspects that give the focus of this research a significant relevance.

On the other hand, this work highlights the difficulty of anticipating results or group movements, not only because the intersubjective manifested in the conversation organized itself collectively in the process, but also because more private or personal changes have dynamics and processes away from the gaze of direct observers. The dialogue qualities were respectful listening, remaining non-judgmental, maintaining interest and benevolent attention, leading the group to collect and think in the intersubjective and the intrasubjective dimension, and producing mobilizations impregnated by the quality of the lived experience.

Another crucial aspect of this work was to involve the contextual conditions in the reflection, not as an initial statement, but as the organizer of meaning. The result is a complex analysis including factors as the psychosocial conditions of the grandparent groups, in the personal/historical reality of the participants, and a cultural reality combining logics from different times. These contextual dimensions become visible, updating your gaze and reflecting on your opportunity. In this sense, the lived "experience" brings together elements from different backgrounds, producing continuous learning.

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