

RESILIENCE FROM COMMUNITY SOCIAL WORK

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Abstract

This paper presents the synergies that exist between the social work profession and the concept of resilience, highlighting that these share common theoretical contents and that in professional practice is committed to the promotion of the capabilities that imply the realization and well-being of the individual, to enhance its autonomy in all fields. In support of this idea, it is based on a study carried out by a survey of a group of social workers in the province of Manabí, and can verify that social workers need to be trained to raise the notion of their work, to take it beyond the problem or Lack.

Keywords:

Capacity of response;
Human potentialities;
Points of disagreement;
Common elements;
Facilitator.

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1. Introduction

The phenomenon that represents the term resilience is not new, although it seems, its history goes along with the tradition of man and is based on the belief that the positive always has to be superior to the negative and that the strengths will have a greater weight than what difficulties can represent.

However, it is in the last years that the concept of resilience has taken root in the academic and scientific field, especially in the social sciences; But saving its preminences, it can be assured that it lies in the human capacity to face adversities and emerge strengthened from them, a reality that proposes a model that emphasizes the strengths that individuals are able to create, conditioning their interaction with the environment through Of its passage through the different vital stages of life [1].

Beyond any conceptual debate can be ensured, that resilience regarded as a social phenomenon that may have origin in the volitional capacity of human beings, represents a paradigm shift: Privilege focus on strengths, not the deficit or problem ; Involves individuals, families, groups, communities and institutions to be part of the solution with the set of internal and external resources that allow facing critical situations of all kinds; It overcomes the notion of individual resilience and is conceptualized in Latin America on family or relational, community, Andean and business resilience [1].

Resilience is retaken by the social sciences in the mid-20th century, from Anglo-Saxon researches that analyzed the positive overcoming of violent or traumatic experiences to systematize and propose strategies for understanding and coping with stress, conflict, dysfunction and crises, such as Elements unavoidable of the human condition, but also probabilistic, as they do not affect all its components in the same way [2].

The International Federation of Social Workers (FITS) defined at its Montreal Assembly in July 2000 that the social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relations and strengthening and liberation of the people to increase well-being . Through the use of theories about human behavior and social systems. Social work intervenes at the points where

people interact with their environment. In this way the principles of Human Rights and Social Justice are fundamental for social work [3].

Social work and resilience are, therefore, two interconnected and complementary realities. The concept and models of resilience do not constitute a panacea or a simplifying recipe for the complex processes of social intervention, but they can be an approach that, in a transversal way, guides the interventions of social workers. Resilience is emerging as a research line with great potential for development in the future for its application to the field of social, in general and in social work in particular.

The province of Manabí, which is one of the poorest in Ecuador and in April 2016 was hit by an intense earthquake that left economic losses for more than three billion dollars and hundreds of lives that can not be recovered, aggravating The social situation of the province, especially children, young people, the elderly and people with low incomes. The objective of the work is to expose the synergies that can be created when starting from resilience to develop the field of social work, making use of the strengths beyond the problem and the deficiencies, adopting a new perspective of the people and their Circumstances, going beyond the narrow limits of the purely welfare field, to move to development as the primary function of social work..

2. Research Method

The induction-deduction method was applied, starting with a logical reasoning of the concepts related to the essences of social work and the conception of resilience, to expose a logical formulation of the role of the social worker in order to create synergies that allow raising the Level of the resilient capacities of social subjects. All of the above was applied in order to unveil the essence of the scientific problem, in the processing of information and the definition of the system of central and operative categories. In addition to reaching the corresponding conclusions, they were useful in recommending the design of an adequate policy to guarantee the use of the strengths of resilience in the development of community social work

3. Results and Analysis

3.1. Social work and resilience, encounters and Blurs

The work of social work focuses on reducing the effects of poverty and improving the relationships that can raise the living conditions of many people, and not only help the individual, but fight for social justice in a climate of community cooperation , Working to eliminate racism, gender discrimination, religion, xenophobia and other social ills. They stand out for their role as pioneers and innovators, developing their activity in a complex climate where other professionals do not prefer to reach, however, their creative function of knowledge has been little recognized and for years the profession has played a role without much importance [4].

For its part, the essence of resilience refers to the ability of individuals to cope with adversity. In this regard, qualities such as optimism, adventurous spirit, courage, self-understanding, humor, ability to work hard and the ability to relate to others. Under this approach the person who possesses and develops these qualities is called resilient; but this is not far from the factors that make possible the development of human capacities to face adversity, which are located in the environment and where the person takes an active role to find the possibilities that can be deployed. In this way the environment becomes the motivator for the deployment of resilient capacities [1].

When we analyze carefully the starting point of social work and resilience, we can notice important differences, since social work initiates an intervention from the knowledge of a problem or difficulty that has its center of action in the person, where it acquires significance the sum of deficit symptoms that it presents. In this way the professional attention focuses and prioritizes the problems of the person. The information provided by the investigation of the case, constitutes the raw material for the elaboration of the diagnosis. In this case we seek the intervention of social work, because people do not know how to solve problems. The treatment plan is designed by the social work professional. In this sense, the dysfunctions that are presented define the possibilities for personal development. Likewise, the resources that are counted in the treatment plan are the knowledge, the skills of the professional and the social network.

The qualified professional intervention is focused on reducing the effects of the symptoms and the negative personal and social consequences, that way social work initiates the process of transformation from the problems.

For its part, resilience proposes an intervention from the beginning in the potentialities and resources of the person, which is conceived as an amalgam of talents and resources conceptualized as strengths. Personal counts on how to solve difficulties are the essential route for the person's knowledge.

Analyzing the above, we can affirm that there are points of disagreement and common elements between resilience and social work, which are shown in figure 1. The social work has privileges problems and difficulties for the transformation process. In resilience the accent is placed on the person as a carrier of a flow of potentialities, which are the nucleus for the process of transformation. The first poses the solution to a problem, in the second the enhancement of a quality or qualities. However, there are certain common elements where both approaches merge, particularly when strengths are taken up and prioritized to deal with adversity and when one aspires to the construction of values such as solidarity, kindness and the unceasing pursuit of the harmony of being with their environment.

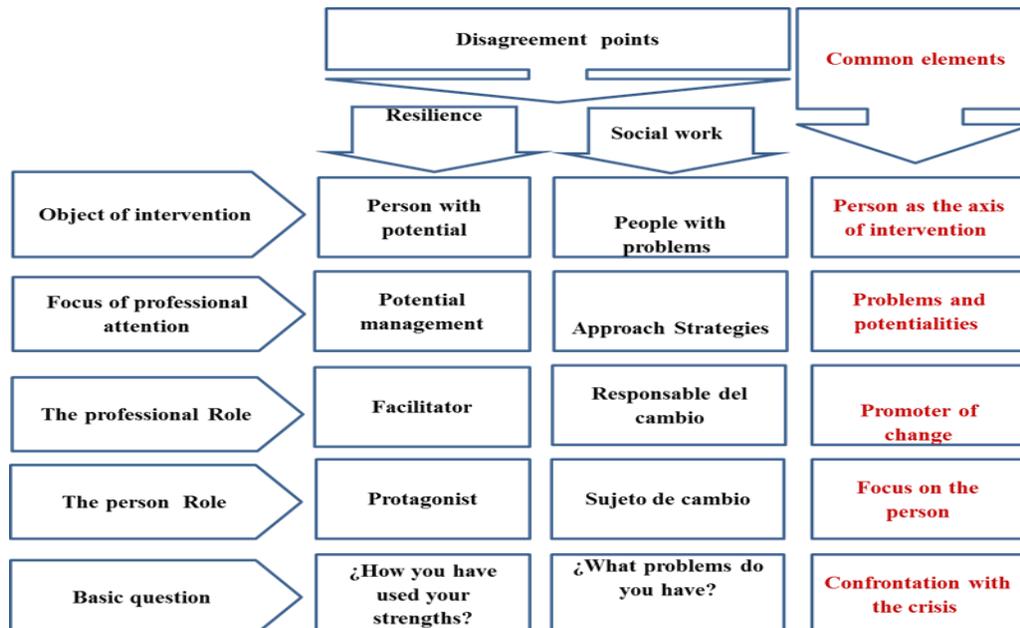


Figure 1. Points of disagreement and common elements between resilience and social work

3.2. Resilience in function of social work

The professional attention of the social work resumes the personal resources to face the social problems and with this it attends, successively, both the adversity as well as the personal results. In this way, social work builds on the strengths and opportunities offered by resilience. In that sense the approach is based on what works well, the factors that make the person, the family or a community are oriented to the search for alternatives to social growth, despite the social conditions of adversity. This could enable the profession to try out ways to expand its perspectives on how people face everyday life in a unique and exclusive way, starting from their potentialities [1].

The main point is that the concept of Resilience and the discipline of social work share two important points of departure: on the one hand, both emphasize the weight of the strengths that individuals, groups or communities can develop in order to overcome the Adversity in their development and personal growth; On the other hand are activated when adversity occurs in the life of individuals, groups or communities [5].

There are several authors who make reference on the social work and the importance of the capacities of the individuals to favor the attainment of its objectives. By activating the capabilities or internal resources of the individual, a greater and better realization of the individual is achieved and, therefore, a better adaptation and well-being [6], [7]. These strengths, called internal resources to the individual, are the basis, the means and the end of many of the professional interventions that seek to achieve the promotion of the capacities that imply the realization and well-being of the individual and the empowerment of their autonomy in all fields. That is why it is designated as a mission of social work, that of facilitating that all people fully develop their potential and enrich their lives, as well as prevention of dysfunctions. That is why social workers are considered agents of change both in society and in the lives of the people, families and communities with whom they work. To carry out this mission social work has a system of values, theory and practice interrelated with each other [5].

In recent years the emphasis on strengths has increased and has become one of the main paradigms, replacing the problem-based approach that had long focused social work. Both approaches are maintained and coexist today, but the one that focuses on strengths is a novel and

different way of seeing people, their circumstances and is characterized by a positivist vision and their way of facing vital changes.

3.3. Resilience in function of social work

With the aim of highlighting the synergies between social work and resilience, a qualitative study was conducted through structured interviews, with the objective of exploring the knowledge of the concept and the pillars of resilience in a small group of social workers Province of Manabí, being able to explore to what extent, many of its configurative elements are incorporated in professional practice, because they are part of the theoretical body and values of the profession.

The purpose of the research was to explore the use of the resilience process by a group of social workers, where a number of objectives were proposed, which for reasons of space are only commented the results obtained in relation to the first objective:

- a. To inquire if in the social intervention a series of personal capacities are explored, they value and they explain a series of personal capacities that favor that the people respond successfully to adverse situations that coincide with what in the literature on the subject are denominated pillars of the resilience;
- b. Know the weight that social workers give to the strengths of people in their professional diagnoses and;
- c. To estimate the degree of knowledge of the concept of resilience and the meaning they give to it.

For the study 16 social workers from the following professional fields were interviewed: women, disability, family, drugs, housing and general social services and to collect diversity in the experience and seniority in the professional exercise, 6 social workers were selected in the Stretch of less than five years of experience, 6 in the middle range and 4 with more than twenty years of work in the profession.

From the study carried out some results were obtained that, although it is not convenient to consider them as generalizing to the globalist of the profession, due to the small size of the sample, if you can take some interesting data that serve as a basis for future lines of research.

3.4. Resilience in function of social work

Most of the interviewees point out the main target of social work to people at an individual level, rather than the effect that their professional action may have in a wider social context such as the group, community or society in their Set in Figure 2 shows the results obtained.

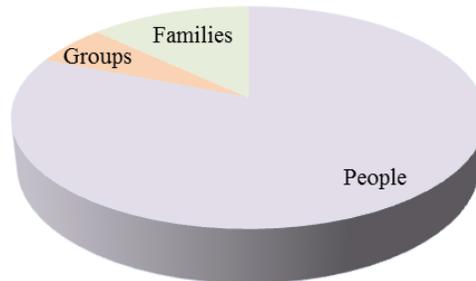


Figure 2. Recipients of the social worker

This assessment is important in view of the fact that it would be a question of exploring whether personal capacities were being worked on, so that placing the person as the epicenter of the activity of social workers suggests the possibility of being valued As important their own resources and internal strengths.

3.5. Resilience in function of social work

The results indicate that the proposed capacities are explored almost entirely by the interviewees. It was possible to detect that the capacities of the people, are not considered as a priori items highlighted as observable, but are only denoted if there is a high deficit of this capacity, in which case one has to work on it, or, if there is an incidence Significant of a certain capacity, which is taken into account because it will benefit the intervention. Figure 3 shows the aptitude of people to resilience.

When this capacity is within the limits of normality, it gives the impression that it can go unnoticed. It can be concluded, therefore, that the capacities are more evident when they are shown in their more polarized ends, lack of them or an evident presence.

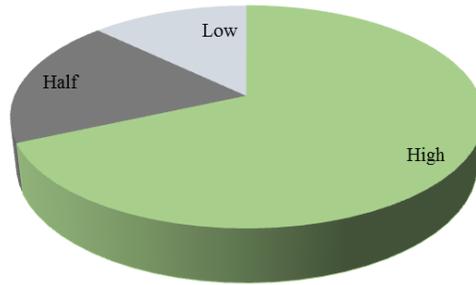


Figure 3. Incidence of people's ability to resilience

3.6. Capacity for intervention planning

Consideration of the capacities for planning the intervention, except in the case of the interaction capacity /relationship in which there is a more unanimous agreement, the enhancement or use of these capacities is not part of the objectives of the intervention In an express way, but it is verified that their presence benefits the process and works on them in an indirect way, being other professionals, mainly the psychologists, who work more their deficits.

In this sense it could be considered that the work of analysis and strengthening of personal capacities could be considered more as a function of the psychologist than a task of the social worker. Regarding this question, it would be worth noting the therapeutic value that the aid relationship process entails and therefore the capacity of these professionals for this work, in a complementary and not exclusive way with other professionals.

Differentiation of the phases of the intervention process

Social work professionals have an experience of the intervention process as a continuum, in which there is no clear distinction between the methodological phases of diagnosis and planning. When asked how they took account of resilient capacities in the diagnostic and planning phases, their responses blended both phases, showing that although theoretically the methodological stages are well differentiated and delimited with their objectives and procedures properly instructed, in Practice are lived as interconnected phases, without adequate differentiation between them.

Recording capabilities in technical documentation

Although the capabilities were explored and considered useful for the intervention process, they were not always recorded in the technical documentation. This seems to break the logic

equivalence that something that is considered important and that is investigated should be properly registered and systematized in the technical documentation of the social worker.

The importance of skills

The capacities that the social workers interviewed considered more important in the people with whom they worked were: independence; The interaction / relationship with others and; the self-esteem. The least mentioned was the sense of humor. This selection seems to be related to the main objective of social work, which, as already explained, is directly related to achieving the autonomy of the people, forging a good social support network and strengthening the processes of self-determination of people in the figure 4 shows their orders according to their importance.

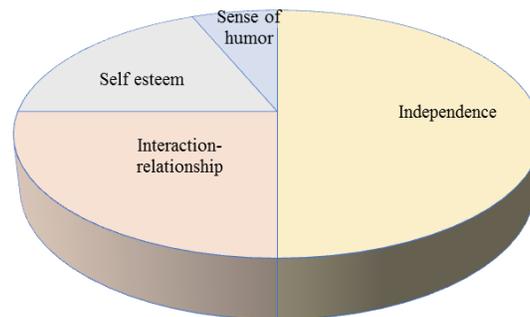


Figure 4. Importance of capacities

It is striking that the capacity for initiative is not located among those considered as most important by the interviewees, since it is a capacity with a central role, since a person who has the will to make and establish changes in his life, is in the best possible scenarios for finding a helping relationship.

Dominion of the concept of resilience

The interviewees' knowledge of the concept of resilience shows that it is a concept that is known but diffuses in its understanding and meaning. They identify well that it is a matter of overcoming adversities successfully, but with more emphasis on the fact that overcoming adversity produces an adaptation, rather than on post-traumatic personal growth and development, which is what characterizes resilience.

The results of the research demonstrated the need for social workers to learn to raise the notion of their work, taking it beyond the problem or lack, and it is necessary to adopt a new perspective of people and their circumstances, that allows to cross the limits Of the assistance and give way to development as a primary function of social work.

It is necessary that work on gaps must also be present, but the perspective that comes from the concept of resilience can be a privileged guide to a quality intervention, because it provides a positive and optimistic look on people, reinforcing the belief In the importance of the environment, leading to reject determinisms, social labels and reinforces the belief in the importance of empathy and respect as key factors in the relationship with people during social work intervention from resilience, Which are two interconnected and complementary realities.

4. Conclusion

1. The concept and models of resilience do not constitute a closed case or a simplifying recipe for the complex processes of social intervention, but they can be an approach that, in a transversal way, guides the interventions of social workers.
2. Resilience is directed as a line of research with great potential for development in the near future, for its application to the field of social intervention in general and social work in particular.

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