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Resources of Resilience amongst the Urban Population

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Abstract

The issue of resilience is analysed both theoretically and according to the data obtained after a field research on a population of 600 people from Drobeta Turnu Severin. The information attests that the main factors, for the destabilisation of the urban population, are related to the affective, social and biological dimension of it. The research unravelled the personal and collective effects of sufferance, along with the strategies adopted for resolving the traumatising conditions. The overwhelming majority of the population are optimistic people, confident in their own forces, who appreciate that their life has been so far, generally, very successful.

Keywords: resilience, perturbing factors, sufferance/pain, individual/collective resilience, strategies of resilience.

Introduction

Resilience constitutes a researching specific issue that has emerged in the last half of the century, thanks to the contribution brought by different specialists in psychology. This can also be found in other fields, such sociology, socio-biology, biology, social assistance, law, history etc., even if the specialists from those areas have not used specifically the concept of resilience. Although each science has its

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own perspective for analysis, nevertheless, the purpose of the already mentioned sciences is a common one: to investigate the adapting capacity of the people to the natural and social environment, by revealing their resources and the ways of using them for the positive adaptation

The premise we start from is that the human being has a bio-psycho-social structure, which the differentiation of his preoccupations derive from too: (1) the biologists and the physicians examine, mostly, the biological resources of the man and his resilience in relation with the destabilising factors of the physical and natural environment;(2) the psychical resources represent the studying subject of the psychologists and psychiatrists, who are interested in the individual's resilience, according to the action of the traumatising factors from the natural and social environment; (3) for the sociologists, the knowledge of resilience in a group and human collectivity is primordial, by identifying the socio-cultural resources;(4) the people who work in the field of law wish to discover to what extent the laws and the normative documents from a certain society (the observing of the human rights) help the individual to manage the destructive actions that he faces at some point;(5) the social assistant examines the personal resilience resources and proposes intervention therapies for positive adaptation, based on specific social investigations (Ionescu, 2013).

The term of resilience was initially used once with the preoccupations from the mechanical physics, being defined as "a property of a metal or alloy to resist to shocks" (according to online DEX). Later, it was also borrowed in certain psychological studies, his reputation being known about the contributions of the psychologists Gamezy (1974, 1985) Rutter 1987, 1995, 1999, 2006, 2008, 2012), Masten (1994, 2001, 2003) and Cyruhnik (2006). Being possibly adopted further, in the future, by other sciences too, which used other concepts for the explanation of the relations among people and environment, and their potential to resist to extreme shocks.

Theoretical premises

In the *psychological language*, resilience is frequently named "personal resilience" or "individual resilience" (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004; 86: 320–333.). This situation is explainable through the fact that, as regarding the psychological preoccupations, the man is usually analysed as an individual who has a certain psychical life, being endowed *with* the capacity to reason, will, temperament, character, aptitudes, memory, affectivity, motivations etc. For the psychologists, "resilience represents the individual's competence to recover after an illness, a change or a calamity" (Neagu, 2010). Generally, resilience is being defined in the researching area of psychology as "the positive adapting" that appears after a stressful or adverse event (Hopf, 2010). The process is one of positive adapting,

of active resilience and functional recovery that allows the individual to mobilize his inner resources and to effectively counteract the action of the upsetting or destructive forces, in order to succeed. Therefore, the solutions offered by the psychological research on resilience concern the individual and the personal life. The interest for the deeper research of resilience, from the psychological point of view, was generated by the notice that certain children, who had to live in a hostile environment, characterized by poverty, war, epidemic diseases etc., succeeded in transcending those situations by developing surviving skills that later helped them to have a normal development. It is very interesting to study the life experience of Boris Cyrulnik who lived the deportation ordeal of his family and Nazi persecution. The problem of resilience was internationally studied by notorious psychologists (Rutter, 1987, 1995, 1999, 2006, 2008, 2012; Garmezy, 1974, 1985; Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Anthony, 1987) and, more recently (Ungar, 2004, 2008; Masten, 1994, 2001, 2003). Further on, we are going to insist more on the specificity of the sociological interpretation of resilience.

The sociological perspective. From the sociological outlook, the man is analysed as a social being, as a member of a certain group, collectivity or society. Such a cognitive measure leads us to the use of „group resilience”, „collective resilience” or community/social/society resilience concepts. For the sociologists, collective resilience regards the capacity of resisting and recovery, revitalisation, rebirth of some groups/communities/societies, after the destabilizing or traumatizing action of certain natural and social factors, radical and explosive changes that concern the life of a human collectivity on the whole. In consequence, when sociology deals with the problems of the collective resilience, the solutions are appropriate at collective level. The fact that resilience is a concept which has not been used in the tradition of the sociological thinking, this does not mean that the real problem that it involves was ignored by certain specialists from this area. For instance, let's recollect that in the psycho-sociological theory about the social nature of the self, William James (1890) draws the attention on the “aggressing” or “damaging” phenomenon regarding the image of certain groups of individuals from a society, which produces “sufferance” to them, signifying the lowering of the “self-esteem”, in relation to the others. The thinker proposed a theory of the social self, through the self-esteem recovery, mentioning two ways: by operating with the knowledge that explains scientifically the relations between the individual and his environment and by stimulating the society to preserve the individual's and groups' self-esteem to high standards. The variation of the self-esteem is admirably presented by the American author, who mentioned that: “A person with low aspirations and great success shows a high level self-esteem”. On the contrary “a person with high expectations, but with reduced results will have a limited self-esteem”. Such logical reports, discovered by W. James, between the rate of success of an individual and his expectations and aspirations, can be rendered valuable in the psycho-sociological concept about resilience, by the thoroughly study of the

self-esteem, as source of resilience. This can mean that if an individual does not ask anything from life is passive and inert, fatalist and cannot succeed in. Consequently, we often hear that the future is for the brave. Furthermore, the American sociologist William Thomas elaborated the theory of “social labelling” and “the theory of individual/social life organisation/disorganisation” in *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (written together with Florian Znaniecki, and published between 1918 and 1920). In the sociological conception about the organization/disorganization of the individual and collective life, the author demonstrates how a society can be disorganized when its culture is in decline and does not offer solutions or resources of resilience. The thesis they reach to is that the period of reorganization is inevitably wider than that of disorganization, as in the case of the Romanian society (which is in an almost endless process of transition from communism to capitalism). According to the author, between the two stages, all the forms of disorder and social pathology, human degradation and malfunction of institutions, which means that the old social system was not accepted, and the population was “morally disarmed”. Therefore, a defending deficit appears, which affects, in our opinion, the humans and individuals’ resources of resilience. In his work called *Sociological imagination*, Charles Wright Mills evidences the drama of the contemporary man, incapable to adjust to the rhythm of the social changes, which leads to the collapse of his fundamental values, fact that creates panic and depression, alienation, impeding his capacity of resilience and transformation, in a world that he defines as one of “anxiety and indifference” (Mills, 1975: 86). Therefore, the sociological approach considers resilience a group or collectivity studying issue. To this respect, the French sociologist Emile Durkheim and other promoters of the etatist or collectivist conception from sociology considered that the social environment owns a primordial role in relation with the individual, meaning that he is in a permanent state of dependency and can be anytime suffocated by the environment in which he lives. Nevertheless, according to the psychologists and the psychological orientation from sociology, some people find plenty of resources in their own strength for succeeding. Similarly, we can also talk about certain peoples and territorial communities that, despite some tragic situations they faced (natural calamities, loss of their freedom after prolonged conquests, internal wars, hunger, poverty, bloody reprisals, genocide acts etc.), ultimately, they managed to go beyond these dramatic periods and to revive, surviving and reinventing themselves in the history. For example, these are the cases of the Armenian people (1914) and the Jewish one (1940-1944) – which experienced the holocaust, losing millions of citizens, the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, completely destroyed after the atomic bombing from the end of World War II. All these demonstrate that not only people, but also societies are subjected to major jeopardy and risk involving their physical disappearance, emerged both from the internal and external sides. Currently, the problems that the entire humanity is facing are numerous, and some of them have already become chronic world-wide (wars, under-development, devaluation of human life, diseases,

poverty, terrorism, natural and nuclear disasters, economic crises etc.) (Otovescu et.al, 2011:38-88; Otovescu et.al, 2012). Although the consequences are painful, and some of them are even frightful (for example, over 60 million people lost their lives, along the 20th century, because of the two world wars), yet, the mankind managed to resist biologically, psychically and morally, to discover proper resources for continuing life on earth.

The biological perspective. In order to understand the man as a biological being, when examining the issue of resilience, we can resort to Charles Darwin's "natural selection" theory. It has as main grounds the idea of the fight for existence of all the living beings, therefore of the humans too, explaining this way his biological condition, his natural evolution as natural being, through his adapting to the environment and the surviving of those apt to assure the hereditary transmission of the character. The mechanical applicability of the Darwinist theory to the social life, by thinkers as Gumplovitz (1893), Gobineau (1853; 1855; 2002) or Nietzsche (1901; 1999), led to erroneous interpretations; such are the classification of the human races in superior and inferior, the eulogy of the most powerful individual etc. A certain animal remaining in the human behaviour cannot be ignored, according to a thesis sustained by Wilson too (1975). The author evidenced some previously programmed aspects of the human and animal behaviour (such communication, hierarchy, solidarity, altruism, aggressiveness etc.), fructified the discoveries from genetics and analysed the issue of the natural selection in terms of costs and benefits, on social and institutional level (transcending the impasse of the classical evolutionism that reduced selection to individuals).

Interdisciplinary confluences. The fact that the man is, simultaneously, a bio-psycho-social being, determines not only the possibility but also the necessity of the interdisciplinary researching of resilience. The connections between individuals and groups or collectivities are indissoluble because there are neither individuals living outside a society, nor societies without individuals (Otovescu, 2009: 73-74). Meanwhile, we underline that the individuals play a well-established role in the social evolution (that unfolds according to norms, laws, values created by humans and not by a simple process of adapting, which justifies the natural evolution). The capacity to adapt is a natural endowment of the humans, which the living inside a society can protect easily or can suppress, depending on the nature of the society and its institutions. The more developed and better organised a society is, the greater its surviving possibilities are. Resilience is a biological and cultural potential that the individuals and the communities they belong to can equally benefit from. Essentially, resilience is the consequence of individuals and human collectivities selection, process after which the powerful, the flexible, the adaptable, the confident and the optimistic triumph. From here emerges the necessity to also discover the factors, the individual or collective resources that

lead the individuals and the communities to success, when confronting adverse conditions.

Methodological approaches

The objective of this paper is to unravel the resources of resilience of the urban population, when disruptive factors manifest inside a community. The premise we started from is that the city from the Romanian society constitutes a specific system, characterized by definite institutional structures and activities, that satisfies the basic needs of its dwellers: for working and obtaining an income able to assure them a decent living, for communication, solidarity, education, security, spare time activities etc. It is well-known that any territorial collectivity, therefore the city too, has to own a functional order, to correspond the expectations of the citizens: an economic order, an administrative order, a moral order, an institutional order, a behavioural pattern and people's interaction order etc. All these lead to the accomplishment of the individual and collective needs, to the solving of problems and conflicts that may appear in the cohabitation process. The lack of order from certain departments of the city produces instability and blockings, dissatisfaction, disorganization in the individual and collective life, personal and family failure.

For that reason, the deciphering of collective resilience resources implies, altogether, the discovery of the factors or conditions, the situations that direct to instability, traumas for individuals. The results of psychological researches show that, given the same circumstances of hostility, adversity or risk, people react differently: some of them are psychically and behaviourally disorganised, while others struggle and succeed to surpass the difficulties. How does this beneficial effect for the individual life take place? What do people who surpass the difficulties resort to? Do they use only their inner strength or the help of the close people (family, relatives, friends, colleagues, and neighbours), the support of official/unofficial institutions? It is known that family, profession/occupation and job, social group (friends, colleagues, relatives, and neighbours) represent that main factors on which the man rely on, as a social being.

The investigation of the collective resilience in the urban environment was realised through two sociological methods: a quantitative one – the poll based on a questionnaire, and a qualitative one – the structured interview (that we are going to detail in the present article). The researching area was represented by the population from Drobeta Turnu Severin (County residence of Mehedinți). The volume of the sample was of 600 people, of 18 years old and over, both genders, randomly chosen, with a sampling interval of 3 and a margin of $\pm 2.4\%$, assuring the degree of representativeness according to the share of the population on streets and neighbourhoods from the city. Both the questionnaires and the

interviews were applied at the domicile of the respondents, through direct contact (face to face). Most of the questions from the questionnaire had pre-formulated answers and, generally, they were grouped thematically, according to the indicators considered in the process of gathering field information.

The projection of the sociological research was made taking into account several hypotheses, among which, in the present context, we mention the following: (1) If people have an optimistic nature and show trust in themselves and succeed in life in a greater extent than the pessimistic or the sceptical and distrustful; (2) The harsher sufferance of people is related to their affective nature (the loss of a dear person), social nature (the loss of a job, marriage) and biological nature (the confrontation with a serious illness); (3) The older the people are, the more resistant to the traumatising factors they become.

Results of the field research

Perturbing factors and destabilising causes

In the last 25 years, the Romanian society has been marked by an ample process of radical social changes, due to the transition from the communist to capitalist regime. This process has been encompassing not only the entire society, but its territorial component communities, especially the cities, the Municipality of Drobeta Turnu-Severin being among them. The basic reconstruction of Romania, starting with 1989, and of other eight European societies (that broke from their communist past), produced a series of anomic phenomena and human degradation situations, as W. Thomas also noticed, when referring to his times society. These pathological behaviour manifestations, at individual and group level, and the institutional malfunctions – unknown to the societies with a long capitalist evolution – challenged the adaptation capacity of the urban population to the rhythm and the negative consequences of the social changes, and we can call it urban resilience. In such a climate, of confusion and disorientation, of values collapsing and weakening of public institutions authority etc., a multitude of perturbing and traumatising factors manifested, towards which there were registered ambivalent reactions: of resignation and failure or of individual and collective resilience.

Next, we are trying to sketch a typology of the destabilising factors/causes, along with the forms of resilience, mentioning that most of them have been registered in our society during the interval 1990-2014. The most general classification has in its foundation their origin and, this way, we can encounter factors/causes that belong to the natural conditions (earthquakes, floods, landslides, draught etc.) and those specific for the human background. Altogether, some factors are specific for the rural environment, while others regard only the urban

environment and the society in its whole. There are factors that are related to the individual (e.g.: a serious illness), while others produce the destabilising effects inside a group or collectivity (an earthquake, for instance), to the society (for example, a war). According to their nature and the field of manifestation, we met the next categories of traumatising factors: (1) *personal or individual factors*: illness, sufferance or pain caused by the death of a dear person, solitude, stress, failure, pessimism; (2) *family factors*: conjugal violence, adultery, divorce, aggressiveness against children etc.; (3) *social factors*: unemployment, lack of a dwelling, poverty, hunger, devaluation of human life, low living standard, degradation of communication relations between people, lack of medication and innovative treatments, alert rhythm of changes, lack of physical protection and personal priorities, corruption, aggressiveness and abuses of certain public institutions etc; (4) *political factors*: deficit of laws for regulating the situation in certain fields, inter-institutional conflicts, political crisis, inefficiency of the state's fundamental institutions, collective interests ignoring, lack of objective and national development projects etc.; (5) *economic factors*: lack of jobs and major investments for the development of national infrastructure, lack of income, low level of wages/pensions, financial crisis, dissolving of factories and instability of jobs etc.; (6) *juridical factors*: bad management of justice, exaggerated prolonging of law suits, abusive investigations and the harassment; (7) *moral factors*: maliciousness, envy, treason, revenge, public contempt, discrediting, mass-media defamatory actions, lack of respect and solidarity, ignoring the sufferance of the people near us etc.

Some factors are generally human; others are specific for a certain society and historic period. Some act on long term, others on medium and short term. In any society, social order and disorder coexist, in variable proportions, from one country to another. This means that the destabilising, unhealthy factors are inherent to the human condition and, in the same time, they produce an immunity deficit, through the supplying of the social pathology phenomena. This is the reason for the necessity to be counteracted by the healthy and positive forces of the society, through actions of individual, collective and institutional resilience, official or unofficial, that fortify the general immunity inheritance. The combined action of some perturbing or destructive factors (such the finding of a serious illness), breaking of a marriage and loss of job can have devastating effects of a person, on short or long term, blocking his resources of resilience.

Along our research, we wished to unravel the main perturbing factors that acted among the population from Drobeta Turnu-Severin and, implicitly, to find out the share of the people who resisted the effects on them, and the means or the strategy they adopted to move on with their lives. The concrete information was gathered with the help of a question: *Which is the greatest pain or sufferance have you had so far?*

Table 1. *Hierarchy of pain or sufferance categories (according to self perception)*

No.	Which is the greatest pain or sufferance have you had so far?	%
1	Passing away of a dear person	45.1
2	Loss of the job	6.7
3	Argument with the family/relatives	3.9
4	Suffering from a serious illness	2.5
5	Divorce	2.3
6	Other	2.4
7	DK/DA	37.1
	TOTAL	100

It can be noticed that there were four categories of causes or traumatising factors, at the level of the researched collectivity. Among these, on the first place there was the loss of a dear person, which has the highest share, affecting almost half of the total investigated population (45.1%), being followed by the loss of the job (approximately 7%), which proves the second hypothesis of our research. The first is a general-human factor that cannot be avoided and that every person who was born inside a family has to face in the community. This has an unlimited duration of manifestation. Moreover, unemployment is a direct and inevitable consequence of the market economy that generates affective vulnerabilities (individual and familial), on variable intervals of time. If death is an implacable natural phenomenon, unemployment is a social one whose solution belongs especially to the political and economic institutions from the local community (C.W. Mills), and also to each individual. In the first case, people are powerless, and their spiritual recovery depends on the time passing, their own education and relation with the social environment; in the second case, positive adapting and the seeking for working opportunities depend mainly on the subjective, personal factor.

The sufferance induced by the death of parents (31.8%) and of husband/wife (19.9%) was invoked by over a half of the questioned subjects. Other dear people were a brother/sister (6%), friends (6%), children (5.7%), grandparents (5%), and cousins (2%). Other traumatising factors for the urban population from Drobeta Turnu Severin were the family conflicts (3.9%), suffering from a serious illness (2.5%), and divorce (2.3%).

Types and forms of resilience

Generally, for each of the types of factors mentioned above, there are corresponding response reactions. If we consider the interferential criterion, then we can distinguish the next types of resilience: individual, group, collective and national. In exceptional situations, such is the rapid and mortal spreading of some incurable viruses (as in the recent case of the Ebola virus epidemic, from three states of the Western Africa), the entire global community mobilise themselves to

resist in front of such dangers that menace the entire human species. According to the duration of manifestation, resilience can manifest on short, medium and long term. According to the sphere of action, it can be extended or restrained inside a human collectivity. According to the way of manifestation, it can be general or selective (for example, an individual is capable to rebuild his life after a divorce, but is not able to apply for a new job, after unemployment). According to the structure of the human being, we can talk about hostile situations, not only through the discovery of personal solutions, but also through the resort to the help of official institutions, as citizens (the observing of right to life implies the granting of medical assistance, unemployment payment etc.). According to the degree of intensity, we can talk about a minimal and maximal resilience. Moreover, we can meet a latent, potential resilience and a manifesting, potential one; a powerful and weak resilience etc.

The research made amongst the urban population from Drobeta Turnu Severin evidenced that the overwhelming majority of them have generous resources of individual and collective resilience, especially with relation to the activities they have performed, during their life, from which have not missed the moments of pain or sufferance. The affirmation is made after the answers to the question: *Has your life so far been mostly full of...?*

Table 2. *General evaluation of personal life (according to success and failures)*

No.	Categories de options	%
1	Triumphs, accomplishments, success	82.7
2	Failure, dissatisfaction, disappointment	16.6
3	DK/ DA	0.7
	Total	100.0

The high share of the people who generally evaluated their own life, by then, in positive terms can be firstly explained through the psychological factors related to the human nature – the type characteristic to each person. The poll showed that 79% of the inquired subjects confessed they have an optimistic nature, they manifest trust and hope that they can achieve their goals, which conforms the first hypothesis of our study. At the opposed pole there were situated the pessimistic people, who trust nobody, not even themselves, and who lack the hope of fulfilling their dreams (21%).

The individual psychological pattern, from which the personal resilience derives, has a major part when comes to fighting against obstacles in life, but does not totally justify the conclusion above. For this reason, we consider that it is necessary to take into account other factors too, related to social life, affiliation, collective mentality and cultural identity, national belonging. Different previous sociological researches attest the fact that the Romanians are generally optimistic people, full of energy and eager to succeed personally and at the family level, to

have a prosperous life, which their successors will enjoy too. Nonetheless, the investigation made in Drobeta Turnu-Severin showed that 51% of the dwellers are content and very content, a percent that coincide with the share of those who evaluated their lives through failure and dissatisfaction. The main sources of satisfaction, as the questioned people appreciated, are, first of all “a fulfilling family life” (43.3%), “professional success” (24.3%) and “good health” (11.3%), followed by “safety of the neighbourhood” they live in (5.3%), “the achievements of their children” (2.4%) etc. such sources of satisfaction also indicates the system of values that they people from Severin rely on their own lives. On the other hand, “reduced income” (48%), “lack of jobs” (3.8%), “stress/fatigue” (3.1%), “children’s behaviour” (2.5%) and illnesses were considered the most important causes for discontent or dissatisfaction, and discomfort.

Certainly, people’s life is not just triumph, but it also involves failure, disappointment, resignation. In other words, success and disappointment coexist, but what matters is the share of the people who see their own life devalued, meaningless, rejected by the local community. Therefore, the category of the unfulfilled, in proportion of almost 17%, draws the attention on the necessity of some individual and group therapies, of local social assistance intervention, for helping them in order to recover their own determination, to gain resources of resilience, to not be vulnerable anymore.

Capacity of resilience against pain/sufferance

Duration. According to this indicator, it was noticed that over a half of the people affectively unbalanced by the loss of a dear person and by a persistent serious illness, continue to be even presently distressed, at almost 10 years after the event took place. The traumatised are the people who lost a family member: children (declared 95% of the total number of those affected by these tragic situations), husband/wife (68.3%), brother/sister (59.8%), and parents (49.7%).

Table 3. *Types of pain/sufferance (by time of manifestation)*

The greatest pain/ sufferance	Time of manifestation								Total
	under 3 months	4-6 months	7-9 months	10-12 months	1-3 months	4-6 months	7-9 months	still in present	
disappearance of some dear people	2.6%	4.9%	1.1%	4.5%	9.7%	5.2%	6.4%	65.6%	100.0%
contacting a serious illness	0.0%	9.1%	0.0%	9.1%	18.2%	0.0%	9.2%	54.5%	100.0%
loss of the job	12.9%	12.9%	6.5%	6.5%	9.7%	3.2%	22.3%	26.1%	100.0%
argument with the family/relatives	28.6%	7.1%	4.3%	5.0%	0.0%	14.3%	5.0%	35.7%	100.0%
divorce	4.8%	0.0%	4.8%	0.0%	19.0%	4.8%	38.1%	28.6%	100.0%

The effects of pain/sufferance. The research evidenced six important consequences, which are different according to the factors or the perturbing causes. For example, depression is characteristic for the people who contacted a serious illness (50%) and for those who lost a dear person (37%); the lack of will for living and concentration, or depressionate extremely important for those who lost their jobs; the increase of irascibility is higher among those who argued with their family or relatives; solitude and depression are more frequent among those who experienced a divorce.

Table 4. *Types of pain/sufferance (by effects on the personal and social life)*

The greatest pain/ sufferance	Effects on the personal and social life							Total
	Increase of irascibility	Lack of will for living	lack of concentration	Solitude	Lack of support	Depression	Others	
disappearance of some dear people	4.5%	8.6%	5.2%	19.2%	12.3%	37.0%	13.2%	100.0%
contacting a serious illness	0.0%	10.0%	15.0%	0.0%	12.5%	50.0%	12.5%	100.0%
loss of the job	4.5%	20.8%	20.8%	4.5%	18.5%	19.1%	11.8%	100.0%
argument with the family/relatives	43.0%	10.0%	20.0%	0.0%	13.7%	13.3%	0.0%	100.0%
divorce	15.4%	7.9%	0.0%	37.7%	0.0%	23.6%	15.4%	100.0%

The possibility to transcend the sufferance. From the entire population who mentioned the sufferance, 23% succeeded in transcending it up to present, almost 20% are still facing it, and 57% did not know what to answer. Those who experienced family arguments and lost their jobs proved to be in a greater extent (65% and 52%) to surpass the sufferance provoked by these situations, while more than half of the divorced (60%), from those with a serious illness or who dealt the loss of a dear person confessed that they did not manage to surpass the personal problems. The resilience of these categories is relevant for 46% of those who lost someone, for 44.4% of those who got sick and for 40% of the divorced.

Table 5. *Capacity of resilience (by types of pain/sufferance)*

The greatest pain/ sufferance	Did you succeed to transcend this problem?		Total
	Yes	No	
disappearance of some dear people	46.4%	53.6%	100.0%
contacting a serious illness	44.4%	55.6%	100.0%
loss of the job	51.7%	48.3%	100.0%
argument with the family/relatives	65.0%	35.0%	100.0%
Divorce	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%

Strategies of resilience

On individual level, the strategy involves the establishing of the objective and necessary means to accomplish it, ascertaining of operational solutions, choosing of approaching methods. The research evidenced seven solutions or recipes that the questioned subjects resorted to in order to transcend the traumatising situations they faced. Among these, two are common for all the categories of sufferance: those who aim the friendship connections and those who are related to the qualified services of some specialists (physicians, psychologists, psychiatrists). From the table bellow, we can notice that in all the cases it was resorted to combined solutions, methods or modalities, but some of them have a greater frequency, being specific for the attenuation or the healing of certain causes of the sufferance. For example, the remedy for unemployment implies the initiation of their own business, finding of another job, in locality or in another country, as 62% of the people who lost their jobs declared. The data of the research show that the emigration for working abroad was the solution that 36% of the redundant people from Drobeta Turnu Severin resorted to, most of them leaving in Italy, England, Germany and Spain. According to the official statistic data, Mehedinți County has over 12,713 unemployed people (of which 27% live in cities), unemployment being one of the most important social problem the population has been dealing with in the last two decades. The rate of unemployment in January 2014 was of 10.50% (AJOFM Mehedinți, February 2014), being one of the highest, as compared to the other Counties from the country (on the national level, the rate of unemployment was of 7.3%).

Medical treatment and friendship proved to be useful to defeat the serious illness. In case of losing a dear person, people resorted to the help of friends and specialists in psychology/psychiatry. The consequences of a divorce were healed by remarrying, requirement of affective support and travelling long journeys.

Table 6. *Ways and solutions to transcend the sufferance*

The greatest pain/ sufferance	Ways to transcend the sufferance							Total
	I resorted to friends	I found another job	I got divorced	I went to see a physician, psychologist, psychiatrist	I bought a pet	I travelled a lot	I remarried	
disappearance of some dear people	42.9%	0.0%	0.0%	21.8%	12.1%	12.1%	12.1%	100.0%
contacting a serious illness	36.2%	0.0%	0.0%	58.5%	2.1%	3.2%	0.0%	100.0%
loss of the job	35.3 %	61.7%	0.0%	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
argument with the family/relatives	30.9%	20.8%	9.8%	4.5%	18.5%	4.5%	11.0%	100.0%
divorce	28.6%	0.0%	0.0%	9.4%	4.2%	22.0%	35.8%	100.0%

The correlation of the answers to the question *Up until now, have you managed to transcend the issue of the experienced suffering?* with gender, age and legal status of the questioned people, reveals conclusive information about the capacity of resilience of the urban population, according to these demographic variables. Thus, it came that the men transcend the suffering in a greater extent (55.3%) than the women (44.7%), the last ones being, most of them (66.2%), still dominated by the registered affective anxieties.

Table 7. *Capacity of resilience (by gender)*

Up until now, have you managed to transcend the issue of the experienced suffering?	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Yes	55.3%	44.7%	100.0%
No	33.8%	66.2%	100.0%

Furthermore, the middle aged people have a higher existence potential than the older groups of age, which, apparently should be immunized after accumulating knowledge and multiple life experiences. The collected data prove the contrary: as the age increases, the share of the people who said they transcend the experienced suffering (from 14.9%, between “56 to 65 years old”, to 11%, between “66 years old and over”), fact that invalidates the third hypothesis of our study.

Table 8. *Capacity of resilience (by age)*

Up until now, have you managed to transcend the issue of the experienced suffering?	Age						Total
	18-25 years old	26-35 years old	36-45 years old	46-55 years old	56-65 years old	66 years old and over	
Yes	11.6%	19.9%	21.3%	21.3%	14.9%	11.0%	100.0%
No	6.2%	16.2%	17.5%	8.8%	10.0%	41.3%	100.0%

From the correlation with the legal status, it resulted that the married people, with a normal family life, have positive readapting resources in a higher share (58.5% of the total number), than those who live alone, who proved to be more vulnerable. The proof is that 47.5% of the unmarried people and 33.8% of the widowers and widows appreciated that they did not surpass the previous suffering, as it can be noticed in the data of the table below.

Table 9. *Capacity of resilience (by legal status)*

Up until now, have you managed to transcend the issue of the experienced suffering?	Legal status						Total
	DK/DA	married	Unmarried	divorced	widower/widow	concubine	
Yes	1.0%	58.5%	16.0%	7.4%	16.0%	1.1%	100.0%
No	0.0%	16.2%	47.5%	2.5%	33.8%	0.0%	100.0%

Conclusions

The first researches on personal resilience belong to some specialists in psychology, but the complexity of the human being (determined by his bio-psycho-social structure) claims the necessity of some inter-disciplinary analyses, based on the theoretical acquisitions from biology, psycho-sociology, social assistance, law sciences etc. In the present article we insisted on the specificity of the sociological approach that treats resilience as a social phenomenon, evaluating its manifestations on the collectivity level, according to the information gathered inductively (from individual to general). Thus, the sociological perspective was combined with the psychological one, for realising the research and for investigating the concrete data, considering that each individual lives in tight connection with the destiny of the collectivity he belongs to (from here resulting the heuristic importance of the psycho-sociological studies).

Due to the fact that resilience is a consequence after the action of some perturbing factors, it is necessary to know the relation between cause and effect. In this context, it has to be underlined that resilience is different according to a certain system of reference and it has to be examined individually, in group, in collectivity and in the national society. The diversity of the environments a person lives in and the fields of activity from a society cause a multitude of traumatising actions, classified in several types (personal, familial, social, politic, economic, judicial, moral) etc. The typology procedure regarded resilience too, studied in accordance with certain criteria. If we take into account the structure of the human being, we notice three distinct types of resilience: biological, psychical and social/societal. Equally important is also the distinction drawn between the personal resilience and collective resilience, between the general and the selective one (a man benefits by a positive adaptation only in relation to definite traumatising causes). The typology is a necessary condition for the methodical research and for obtaining scientifically relevant knowledge.

Human life is not perfect and, therefore, any person can face pain or sufferance. The research showed that, amongst the analysed collectivity, there are predominant the dissatisfactions related to the human's affective nature (disappearance of a dear person, mentioned by 45.1% of the dwellers), of social life (loss of the job and, implicitly, the source of income, the arguments between family members and divorce, mentioned by 12.9%) and the precarious health condition of the individual (the menacing of the physical existence by a serious illness – 2.5%). The effects of the sufferance on the personal and social life are different according to the generating cause. From the entire population, who indicated a pain/sufferance, the most widely spread effect of it refers to depression (19.4%), followed, from the highest to the lowest share, by solitude (6.2%), lack of will for living (5.2%), lack of support (3.5%), concentration (3.1%) etc. Over 41% of the questioned people expressed the opinion that the sufferance they experienced affected

their personal life, working efficiency and their behaviour in relation to the other people (becoming, especially, more irascible – over 3.5%). The capacity of resilience is more reduced when considering the loss of a dear person, contacting of a serious illness (that do not depend directly on the individual) and the consequences of a divorce, but stronger as confronted to unemployment and family arguments.

Resilience is a natural heritage of the man, which can be amplified through systematic education, through the efficient involving of some specialised institutions and the nurturing of certain values (friendship, solidarity, observing of right to work etc.), meant to support the individual efforts for positive adaptation and human development. The personal strategies of resilience are based on concrete solutions (differentiated according to the traumatising factors), such is the resorting to friends (almost 43%), finding a new job (21.3%) etc. On the investigated collectivity level, 23% of the people who experienced a sufferance succeeded in transcending it, almost 20% are still experiencing it and 57% did not answer.

The data contrast, to a great extent, with the appreciation for their own life (which approximately 83% of them mentioned as successful) and their own nature (evaluated as optimistic by 79%). This discrepancy might be explained though the fact that the sufferance was regarded as a passing event, while the opinion about the fulfilled personal life considers it in general and, the efforts made for the familial and professional achievements, in particular. On the other side, the optimistic people are not expelled from suffering and the trust and the courage that drives them, certainly help them to transcend easily the temporary moments of internal unbalance, as compared to the pessimistic ones.

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