



Family Configurations In The Transition Into Frailty Of Elderly

The First Results Of An Empirical Research Conducted In Italy

THE RESEARCH

ORIGINALITY OF THE RESEARCH:

The project (funded by Cariplo) focuses on the transition to frailty of elderly people over 75, with particular attention to intergenerational relationships.

The transition to frailty is observed starting from a punctual event (stressor) that recently occurred in the biography of the subjects;

Frailty is read as a multidimensional phenomenon that combines both psycho-physical, relational and material dimensions;

Aging profiles refer to the different ways in which the elderly's network (in which it is / NOT at the center), faces the transition and orientates itself or does not orient itself towards new lifestyles, relationships, commitments that allow you to continue to feel good (relative well-being) even in the presence of forms of partial reduction of autonomy;

The different accompaniment strategies identify the presence / absence of a re-positioning of family networks and their planning / strategic ability to organize protective nets for the elderly both by making use of their own internal resources, and by including external informal and formal public supports and / or third sector).

OBJECTIVE:

Explore the main challenges that the transition to frailty of elderly women poses to you and to the people who are part of your network, to understand what are the intervening factors, risk and protection, for the subject and for his primary network .

METHOD

DIADIC INTERVIEW IN UNDERSTANDING (FACE TO FACE AND ON PLATFORM) WITH ELDERLY AND REFERENCE FIGURE OF A NEXT GENERATION,
SHORT STRUCTURED FACTSHEET TO COLLECT INDICATIONS RELATING TO ECONOMIC RESOURCES, MATERIALS AND CONDITIONS OF AUTONOMY / DEPENDENCE OF THE ELDERLY

FOCUS EXPLORED:

1st FOCUS - THE CURRENT TRANSITION: FROM A CONDITION OF ACTIVE LIFE TO A CONDITION OF FRAGILITY;

2nd FOCUS - INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AID / SUPPORT

3rd FOCUS - THE PRESENT - WHICH PROTAGONISM

4th FOCUS - THE FUTURE - WHICH PROJECT

CONTENT ANALYSIS WITH N VIVO:

The analysis of the texts (interviews) is conducted with the Nvivo software which allows you to combine a textual analysis perspective, through the preparation of a complex system of analysis codes.

The construction of the table of codes proceeded by letting the texts speak, without referring to the sequence of questions posed, but enhancing the free communication of the interlocutors.

A second step allowed us to group the codes into macro areas that explain the fields of analysis that we have defined starting from the research hypotheses.

A mix method that combines a grounded level and an interpretative level starting from hypotheses that allow us to observe the transition to fragility as the relating of different dimensions: structural and referential and as an outcome (generative or de-generative) on the investigated dyad.

THE VALUE OF INTERGENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY IN THE TRANSITION TO FRAGILITY

We will analyze ten stories reconstructed through dyadic interviews.

INTERGENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY:

The elderly interviewed are included in intergenerational solidarity networks.

FOCUS ON NETWORKS AND VALUES:

Starting from the dyad, we observe the reference networks in the transition to fragility and the values - acted out or referred - that circulate in the dyad.

STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DYADS

	CASE 1 – Carmela and Paolo	CASE 2 – Lucia and Anna	CASE 3 – Maria and Laura	CASE 4 – Lisa and Davide	CASE 5 – Gianna and Carlo
Individuals in the dyad	Carmela (Mother) and Paolo (son)	Lucia (Elderly) and Anna (volunteer friend)	Maria (Mother) and Laura (daughter)	Lisa (Mother) and Davide (son)	Gianna (Mother) and Carlo (son)
Age	83 - 40	77 - 36	80 - 50	80 - 44	77 - 45
Occupation	Shopkeeper in the Family-run Shop	Employee	Housewife	Skilled Worker	School Principal
Main Stressor	Widowhood, for the Last 9 Months	Discharge from Hospital, 2 Months Before	Relocation after Eviction, 8 Months Before	Widowhood, for 1 Month	Discharge from Hospital, 2 Months Before
Geographical Area	San Cassiano - Lecce, Puglia	Verona - Veneto	Verona - Veneto	Calderara di Reno - Bologna, Emilia-Romagna	Milan - Lombardy
Household Monthly Income	>1,000€	1,000-2,000€	>1,000€	1,000-2,000€	1,000-2,000€
Children	1	1	2	2	3
Grandchildren	No	No	1	1	4
Age of the Spouse	-	80	77	-	-
Self-sufficient Spouse		Yes	No		

THE TRANSITION TO FRAGILITY AS A JOINT ENTERPRISE WITHIN THE NETWORKS

TRANSITION TAKEN:

acceptance of fragility

"You have to face old age and illness in this way, rejecting them means worsening the situation" (case F5, elderly woman)

"I realize that I can't do everything I want. I must begin to need others "(case M4, elderly)

POSTPONED TRANSITION:

denial of fragility

"It would be more important that I start throwing away my crutches and be freer to move" (case F3, elderly)

"Precisely because you couldn't move, wash yourself, etc., I put a person next to you, you didn't mention it. A gentleman comes to you every morning "(M3 case, daughter)

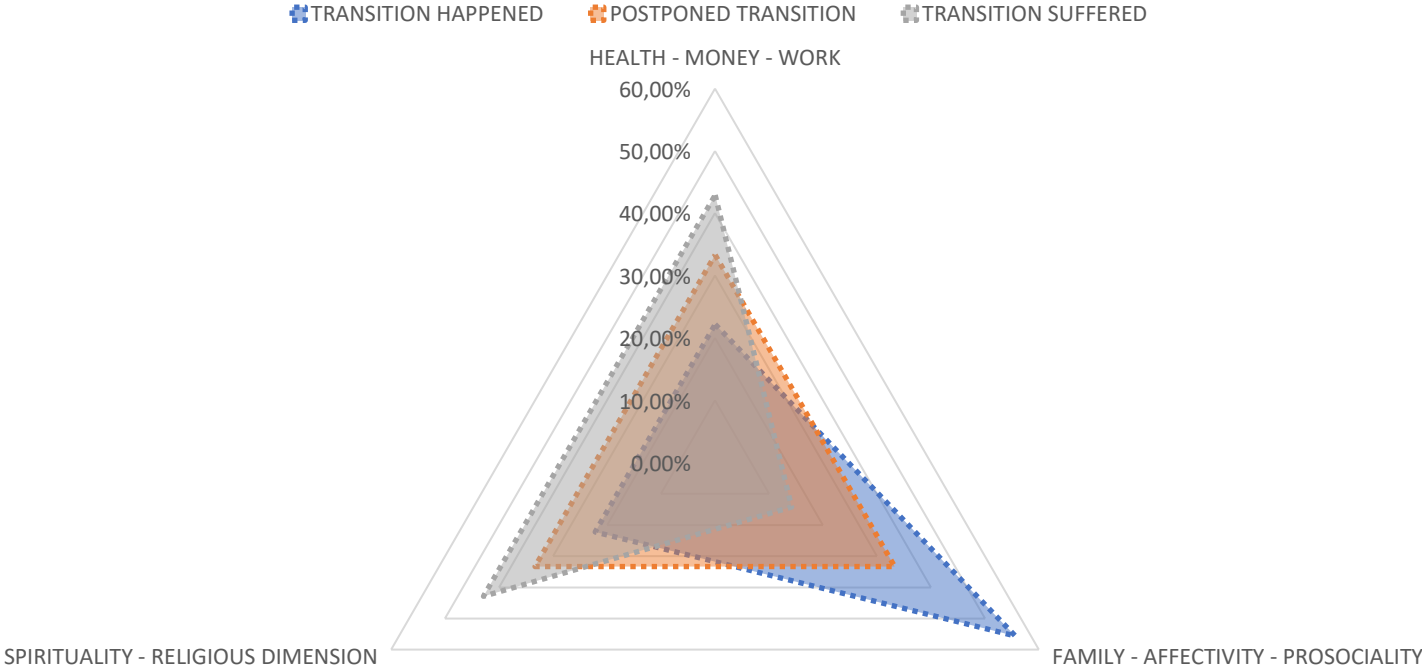
TRANSITION SUFFERED:

suffered fragility

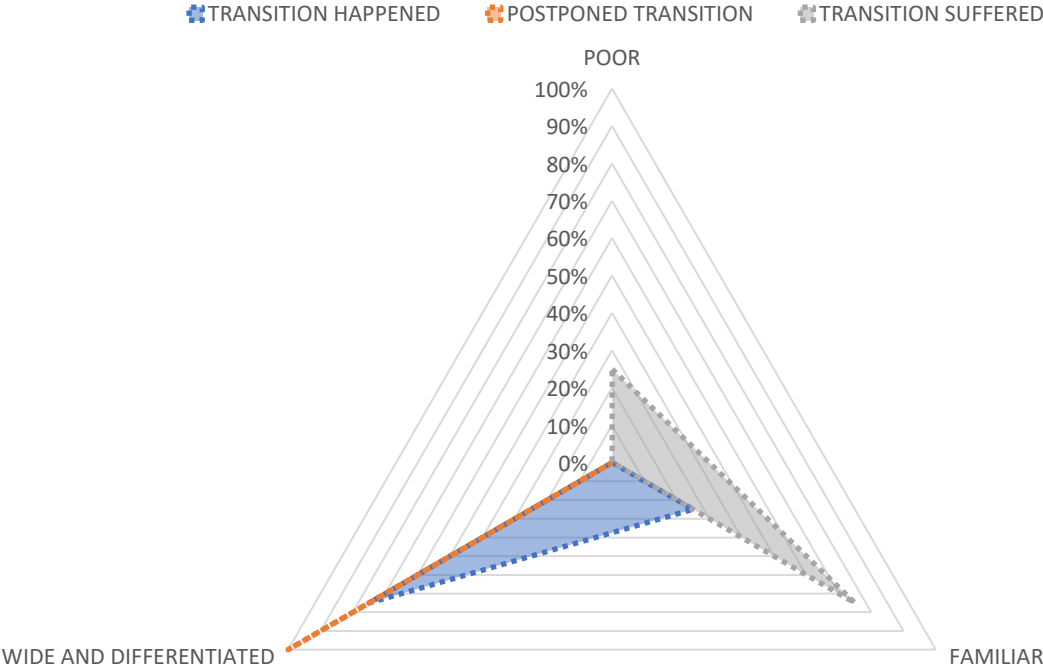
"My day is sad because they no longer let me decide anything, now they decide" (case M1,

"It's heavy ... for us, for me, but more because she has to do what I could" (F1 case, elderly woman)

THE NETWORK OF VALUES IN THE TRANSITION



THE VALUE OF THE NETWORK IN THE TRANSITION



THE VALUE OF INTERGENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY IN THE TRANSITION TO FRAGILITY

GENDER DIFFERENCE:

The reciprocity of care as a key to access the transition to women.

A positivity bent towards the masculine for the perception of seniority.

THE VALUE OF RELATIONS:

The breadth of the network affects the perception scale of seniority, but finds correspondence in the transition. The network can anticipate, postpone or deny the transition.

THE VALUE OF VALUES:

The centrality of relationships, the family and faith in the transition, as fundamental resources of meaning in dealing with the transition.

Social and
community
network

Family ties

TRANSITION HAPPENED:

Strong family ties
Extensive social network
Sharing of cultural /
religious values
Relevance of the
domestic / working
dimension

POSTPONED
TRANSITION:

Strong family ties
Extensive social network
Sharing of cultural /
religious values
Low impact of the
domestic / working
dimension

TRANSITION SUFFERED:

Strong family ties
Lack of networks
Sharing of cultural /
religious values
Low impact of the
domestic / working
dimension

Spirituality /
Culture

Domestic /
professional
dimension

