Surviving *juntas* (together): lessons of resilience of indigenous Quechua women in the aftermath of conflict in Peru

Eliana Barrios Suarez

Research into survivors of war has largely focused on suffering, rather than on the resilience, of survivors. This paper presents a cross-sectional survey that examined the factors contributing to the resilience of indigenous Quechua women (n = 151) in the aftermath of Peruvian armed conflict (1980-2000). Regular participation in civic associations, and the migratory status of returnees after the conflict, were associated with higher resilience. In contrast, low levels of education, unpaid occupations and experience of sexual violence during the conflict were all associated with lower resilience. These findings suggest that social policies that revitalise civic society and reduce gender inequalities within education and employment are crucial to enhance women's resilience in post war zones. In this study, the resilience of Quechua women, in particular their association with political activism, offers an unambiguous example of courage and active resistance to extreme adversity.

Keywords: Peru, Quechua women, resilience

Introduction

Resilience studies are considered a new knowledge frontier in the field of violence and health (Panter-Brick, 2010). Until recently, research has largely focused on the suffering of survivors of war, yet resilience is also recognisable in war affected individuals and communities (e.g. Denov, 2010; Overland, 2010; Pfeiffer & Elbert, 2011), which highlights the need to examine factors that foster this resilience within situations of extreme violence. Despite interdisciplinary interest in resilience (e.g. Fernando, 2012; Burack, Blidner, Flores, & Fitch, 2007; Dimbuene & Defo, 2011; Konner, 2007), the conceptualisation and measurements of resilience remain elusive, this in turn, results in difficulties in evaluating resilience. While there is no consensus, most theorists agree that resilience results from an interaction between individual abilities and a social environment that allows for the use of those abilities in response to adversity (Harvey et al., 2003; Ungar, 2008). Recently developed socio-ecological models of resilience have enhanced the understanding of the negotiating transactions between the individual and their social and physical ecologies (Ungar, 2012). Within the context of armed conflicts, some scholars consider resilience to be the absence of distress symptoms in the aftermath of violence (e.g. Cortes & Buchanan, 2007; Klasen et al., 2010; Punamaki, Qouta, Miller, & El-Sarraj, 2011), but for others resilience is a more complex experience that merits independent assessment (Almedom, Tesfamichael, Mohammed, Mascie-Taylor, & Alemu, 2007; Almedom & Glandon, 2007; Fernando, 2012; Suarez, 2013). Research on resilience in the context of war has also been critiqued for neglecting to account for the collective nature of resilience characteristics of most Southern societies, such as communal care and political participation (Nguyen-Gillham, Giacaman, Naser, & Boyce, 2008). Yet, the need to *'re-moralise resilience'* was suggested by Pupavac (2004) in

order to counteract (currently) prevalent trauma approaches that often risk inhibiting both recovery and strengths of war affected populations.

In addition, the examination of gendered experiences of resilience is essential following the recognition that the empowerment of women is crucial to achieve reconciliation in the aftermath of conflict and to facilitate sustainable local development (United Nations, 2006). Official discourses of peace and conflict continue to view women primarily as victims, rather than as social actors with agency (Borer, 2009), despite the active presence of women as liberators, leaders and caretakers of families and war torn communities, such as can be seen in Burundi (Idriss, 2010), Sri Lanka (Bandarage, 2010) and Uganda (Abel & Richters, 2009). In the case study presented in this paper, the aftermath of the Peruvian armed conflict (1980–2000) offers a similar example as indigenous Quechua women have been actively involved in the social repair process of their communities.

Background and context: the Peruvian armed conflict

From 1980 until 2000, an internal war involving the rebel group Shining Path (*Sendero Luminoso*) and the Peruvian armed forces took place in Peru. Originating in the Andean province of Ayacucho, the conflict gradually pervaded the coastal region, but the highest level of violence was reached in the Andean provinces. Although some communities defended their perimeters, many were forced to leave their villages and the region. This war was also an attack on cultural practices within the indigenous villages, as *Sendero* attempted to foster a '*cultural revolution*' (Theidon, 2004).

In 1992, *Sendero Luminoso* began to be dismantled, however, the threat of extreme violence prevailed until 2000. The final report of the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (*Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación,* CVR, 2003) indicated that 69,280 people were either killed or disappeared as a result of the conflict. Approximately 75% of these victims were young, male and indigenous, mostly of Andean background, who spoke either Quechua or another native language (CVR, 2003), confirming the disproportionate distribution of violence '*by geography, class and ethnicity*' (Theidon, 2006, p.437). *Sendero Luminoso* was responsible for 54% of the deaths of victims. On the other hand, while *Sendero Luminoso* was responsible for 11% of reported cases of sexual violence, the state forces were responsible for 85%, making those cases difficult to prosecute (CVR, 2003). Additionally, it is estimated that approximately 600,000 people were affected by the massive displacement from Andean communities to coastal urban centres or other communities during the conflict (White, 2009).

The CVR prioritised reparations utilising a human rights based framework. However, victims remain disappointed by the inaccessibility of the reparations process due to the lengthy administrative process and the centralisation of claims in the capital city, among other factors (Laplante & Rivera, 2006). Despite this, indigenous communities are attempting to rebuild their social fabric through their own cultural means, including the employment of traditional rituals of '*forgiveness*' (Theidon, 2006) and '*forgetting*' (Elsass, 2001), in order to incorporate former combatants back into the community again. Another important contribution of the CVR was the identification of high levels of historical discrimination against the indigenous population as a core basis of the violence (CVR, 2003). Unfortunately, provinces with a majority population of indigenous people continue to have lower levels of income and education than the rest of the country. Structural violence theory informs us that '*violence is built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances*' (Galtung, p. 169, 1969). Most importantly, this theory reminds us of the importance of studying

the legitimisation of violence, in this case, the historical targeted violence against the indigenous population of Peru. In addition, disaggregated statistics have shown that indigenous women are in a more disadvantaged position, with higher rates of illiteracy, poverty and unemployment than their male counterparts (National Institute of Statistics and Informatics, *Instituto Nacional de Estadisticas e Informatica,* INEI, 2013). Despite these inequalities, research in post conflict Ayacucho (Gamarra, 2009; Theidon, 2006; Trigos, Lagos, & Huamani, 2006) indicates that while Quechua women have certainly been victims of extreme violence, they must also be recognised as survivors of what they describe as *sasachakuy tiempo* (difficult times), for fiercely fighting for the human rights of their families and communities, and for continuing to advocate for the disappeared to the present day.

As shown, the indigenous population in the highlands of Peru was disproportionately targeted with extreme violence, causing much suffering and distress (Instituto Especializado de Salud Mental (IESM), 2003; Pedersen, Tremblay, Errazuris, & Gamarra, 2008; Snider et al., 2004; Suarez, 2013a; 2013b). This, therefore, also required a deeper understanding of the simultaneous resilience process (Bonnano, 2008). This study on the factors contributing to the resilience of indigenous Quechua women in the aftermath of armed conflict responds to this need to explicitly examine both protective and risk factors of resilience of women in post conflict zones.

This paper expands on the determinants of resilience of Quechua women, an unpublished section of a larger study reported elsewhere, that examined the interaction pathways of resilience and post traumatic responses of Quechua women. The study adopted the theoretical framework of the Consortium for the Integral Development of the Andean Families and Children (CODINFA, acronym from Spanish name), an interdisciplinary group from Ayacucho that define resilience as '*the emotional, cognitive and socio-cultural capacities of individuals and groups that allow them to recognise, confront and transform constructively situations causing suffering or harm and threatening their development*' (CODINFA, 2002, p. 38). Following a participatory approach, an advisory committee of Quechua women, as well as Peruvian scholars and practitioners, informed this study from its initial steps. Most importantly, this study's emphasis on resilience originates from the stated desire of Quechua women to have their '*coraje*' (courage) recognised beyond the narratives of their stories. Therefore, this study purposively examines what influences the resilience of Quechua women in post conflict Ayacucho.

Methods

A cross-sectional survey design was used to answer the following exploratory questions: what are the individual characteristics associated with resilience of Quechua women in the aftermath of armed conflict? Is this association independent of the impact of previous exposure to violence and current life stress? The preliminary phase of the study consisted of translation to Quechua and cross-cultural validation of the instruments selected for this survey. The validation process followed van Ommeren et al. (1999) guidelines and included back translations, focus groups with homologous participants and feedback from key informants and the advisory committee. In 2010, data collection was conducted in Ayacucho Peru, with the guidance of a local advisory group of Quechua women and the participation of three bilingual interviewers (Spanish/ Quechua). To include a wider range of experiences of Quechua women, the study used purposive sampling strategies.[1] The University of Toronto Health Sciences Research Ethics Board granted Ethics Approval for the study.

Setting

Ayacucho is a province in Central Peru proximal to the Andes Mountains. It is also

one of the most disadvantaged areas of the country; the poverty level in Ayacucho (52.6 %) is considerably higher than the overall poverty level (23.9%) in the country (INEI, 2013). At least 75% of the population is of indigenous ancestry and are Quechua speaking. Based on the CVR report, Ayacucho was the province most exposed to violence during the conflict. The city of Ayacucho is the largest urban centre of the region and the primary location of this research, which also included three rural villages: Socos, Ccayarpachi and Maucallaqta. These communities were selected, not only due to their geographical diversity, but also because of their different migratory characteristics; Socos and Maucallaqta are comprised of people who never moved or have returned to these locations after the conflict, while Ccayarpachi consists of a majority of people who have relocated to this location from other places.

Participants

The study involved 151 Quechua women participants: 91 (60%) were from the city of Ayacucho, and 60 (40%) from three rural villages, with a mean age of 46.7 years. Table 1 describes the most salient demographic characteristics of the sample. The inclusion criteria were Quechua women aged 25 years or older, who lived in the region of Ayacucho during the conflict at least part of the time. The age criterion was established to include only women who were at least 10 years old in 1995, the unofficial end of the conflict in the region of Ayacucho.

Measurements

Resilience was measured by the 25-item Connor-Davidson Resilience Scale (CD-RISC; Connor & Davidson, 2003). The CD-RISC defines resilience as '*a measure of stress-coping ability that varies with context, age, gender, time, and culture, as well as with different types of adversity*'. This scale was chosen because of its proven reliability in diverse social contexts and the congruency of its definition of resilience with the framework of CODINFA. A validated Spanish version of the scale was used for the study, and translated into Quechua. The validation process confirmed the semantic equivalence and cultural recognition of the translation.[2] The feedback from focus groups and key informants indicated, however, that some distinctive components of the Andean resilience were absent, for example, cultural identity and reciprocity. Similar to studies in other countries, the CD-RISC mean score in this study (M = 63.99,) is lower than the mean score of 80.4 found in the original validation study of the scale in USA, which may indicate cultural differences in the conceptualisation of resilience (Connor & Davidson, 2003).

General exposure to violence (GEV) was measured by the Harvard Trauma Questionnaire (HTQ) Part I (Mollica, McDonald, Masagli, & Silove, 2004). The HTQ-GEV consists of a list of 15 incidents of violence or stressful events that participants either suffered or witnessed during the conflict. The study used the adapted Spanish/Quechua version validated for use with the Quechua population by Pedersen et al. (2008).

Current life stress was measured by the Life Stress Questionnaire (LSQ) (adapted from Holmes & Rahe, 1967), which consists of a list of 43 events that may have happened in the past year, and their self-assessed stress (0 – 120) impact on participants. Research indicates that life stressors in the aftermath of trauma may hinder resilience and/or enhance the probability of post traumatic responses (Miller & Rasmussen, 2010) and therefore, the inclusion of a measure of current life stress was well justified. The Spanish version of the scale was translated to Quechua and validated by a focus group of homologous participants and feedback from key informants.

Socio-demographic variables included individual and social factors, such as: age,

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of sample

	N = 151	%	M (SD)
Age			46.76 (14.5)
Education			
No education	34	22.5 %	
Elementary	65	43.0 %	
Secondary	30	19.9 %	
Post-secondary	22	14.6 %	
Occupation			
Survival farming/house	94	62.3 %	
Merchant	44	29.1 %	
Employee/other	13	8.6 %	
Marital Status			
Single	23	12.4 %	
Married/common law	99	53.5%	
Separated/divorced	5	3.3 %	
Widow	24	13.0 %	
Migration status			
Never moved	69	45.7%	
Returnee	14	9.3%	
Displaced	68	45.0%	
Residency			
Urban	91	60.3%	
Rural	60	39.7%	
Regular participation in civic associations			
Yes	78	51.7%	
No	73	48.3%	
Income[*]			
Not enough	54	35.8%	
Enough, not sufficient	95	62.9%	
Sufficient	2	1.3%	
Literacy (Read)			
Yes	98	64.9%	
No	53	35.1%	
Living arrangements			
Living alone	8	5.3%	
Living with others	143	94.7%	

[*] Enough income covers basic needs such as food and housing, sufficient income covers also primary needs such as health and education. The majority of the sample had no formal jobs, which precluded the calculation of a numerical measure of income.

marital status, literacy, education, religion, income, occupation, living in urban or rural areas, migration status and regular participation in civic associations. The questionnaire also included an optional, open ended question, providing the opportunity to make further comments about any resilience element(s).

Analysis

Data analyses were performed using PASW 18 (Predictive Analysis Software).[3] Reliability analysis was conducted on the CD-RISC (Cronbach's $\alpha = .85$) indicating adequate reliability to include the scale in the analysis. This analysis was not pertinent to the LSQ and HTQ-GEV, as these scales represented lists of events and not interrelated concepts (Netland, 2001). Bivariate and correlational analyses were conducted to inform the selection of variables to enter on the regression analyses that tested the study research questions.

Results

A detailed description of the violence experienced or witnessed by women participants is presented in Table 2. Women in this sample reported an average of nine traumatic events during the course of the conflict.

Correlational analysis indicated that CD-RISC was significantly correlated with age ($r = -0.258$, $P < 0.05$), but not with the global scores of LSQ ($r = -0.104$, $P > 0.05$) or HTQ-GEV ($r = -123$, $P > .05$). Therefore, LSQ and HTQ-GEV were not included in the regression analysis. Due to the extent of sexual violence perpetrated against Quechua women, question 6 of the HTQ-HGV (experiencing or witnessing sexual violence during the conflict) was transformed into a dichotomous variable: $0 =$ not not experienced/witnessed ($n = 104$) and $1 =$ experienced/witnessed ($n = 47$), and included in the regression.

A regression analysis was performed in order to examine the association of resilience

Table 2 Traumatic events experienced or witnessed as assessed by modified HTQ-GEV (N = 151)

Traumatic event	N	%
1. Severely injured or almost killed	101	66.9 %
2. Tortured	88	58.3 %
3. Combat or armed encounter	81	53.6 %
4. Captured or put in prison	82	54.3 %
5. Received death threats	94	62.3 %
6. Sexually assaulted, battered, abused	47	31.1 %
7. Forced to serve in the military/*Sendero/rondas**	57	37.7 %
8. Forced to kill others	23	15.2 %
9. Violent death of family members, relatives	104	68.9 %
10. Violent death of friends or neighbours	126	83.4 %
11. Any of your relatives/friends disappeared	109	72.2 %
12. House/ animals/harvest were burnt or stolen	87	57.6 %
13. Forced to escape or have passed days starving	108	71.5 %
14. Forced to seek refuge in a village nearby	96	63.6 %
15. Forced to seek refuge in another city or town	105	69.5 %

* *Sendero*: Name of rebel group *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path); *Rondas*: Auto defence groups that were formed in some rural communities to fight against *Sendero*.

with individual characteristics (age, marital status, income, education, occupation, living arrangements, migratory status, experience of sexual violence and civic participation), and community characteristics (urban or rural residency). There is no conclusive theoretical support for a universal combination of individual or community factors associated with resilience (Zahradnik et al., 2010); thus, this analysis was exploratory and a stepwise method was selected for this regression allowing entering of all variables automatically in the analysis and subsequently eliminating ones not contributing to a predictive model. The final model, including 12 regression models, is presented in Table 3.

The model accounted for 32% of the variations in resilience ($R^2 = 0.321$). The resulting regression model shows that lower levels of education (no schooling or only elementary school), unpaid occupations (survival farming/housework/crafts), and having experienced or witnessed sexual violence were positively associated with lower levels of resilience, while regular participation in civic associations and being a returnee were positively associated with higher resilience. Responses from participants choosing to answer the open ended question were consistent with these findings.

Discussion

In this study, resilience was not associated with overall exposure to violence during the conflict or with current stressors, but instead with specific individual experiences and social domains, such as education, occupation, participation in civic associations, migration and experience of sexual violence during the conflict. These findings suggest that in this sample, resilience is indeed constructed from interactive exchanges between an individual's experiences and their environment, which is congruent with the theoretical framework of CODINFA guiding the study. The lack of association of resilience scores with the extreme exposure to violence, multiple losses and current stress also confirmed the theoretical foundation of resilience, that it is not adversity but the response to adversity that defines resilience. Indeed, resilience theorists Kalawaski & Haz suggest one ought '*to consider resilient all individuals that attain an unexpected outcome in front of certain adverse situations, independently of what causes this outcome*' (2003, p. 365). Ungar (2012) also suggests including heterogeneous and atypical processes when examining resilience and its social ecologies.

Lack of access to education and lack of access to employment, two well known indicators of structural violence, were positively associated with lowered resilience of participants. Restricted access to education and fair employment is, unfortunately, a common occurrence for indigenous populations worldwide, for example, indigenous groups in Guatemala (Thorp, Caumartin, & Gray-Molina, 2006), or Aboriginal

Table 3 Final model of stepwise regression examining the association of resilience with socio-demographic variables

	Model	Stand. β	t	Sig.
Step 12	Constant		19.929	0.000
	No education	−0.441	−5.271	0.000
$R = 0.604$	Elementary school	−0.254	−3.065	0.003
$R^2 = 0.364$	Unpaid occupation	−0.385	−2.854	0.005
Adjusted	Civic participation	0.276	3.794	0.000
$R^2 = 0.333$	Returnee	0.142	2.018	0.045
	Sexual violence	−0.172	−2.385	0.018

communities in Canada (Tousignant & Sioui, 2009). Since colonisation, indigenous groups in Peru have been affected by direct and structural violence. Quechua women are indeed a group persistently targeted by structural violence because of their two social identities; indigenous and women, both of which place them at the margins of Peruvian society.

While the association of a lack of access to resources such as education and paid employment with lower levels of resilience illustrates how structural violence influences the resilience of Quechua women, the association of lower resilience with the experience (or witnessing) of sexual violence represents the impact of direct violence on their resilience. Forty-seven women (31%) in this study reported being victims or witnesses of sexual violence during the conflict, a high percentage when you consider that Quechua women have usually remained silent about this experience (CVR, 2003; Theidon, 2004, 2006). Sexual violence during the conflict is also under reported because of the impunity laws promulgated in 2007, which protect perpetrators from the armed forces from legal consequences, rendering accusations incapable of leading to criminal justice (Laplante & Theidon, 2007). These are some of the factors that have prevented those who have experienced sexual violence from denouncing it, and most importantly, as this study indicates, might have negatively influenced their resilience against these crimes.

In terms of the massive displacement of populations from Andean communities to coastal urban centres or other communities during the conflict (White, 2009), the protective role of resources in the development of resilience (Hobfoll, Mancini, Hall, Canetti, & Bonanno, 2011; Ungar, 2008) should also be considered. Within that framework, it was not surprising that women who had returned to their original locations of residency displayed higher levels of resilience than those who had not. Most returnees were supported by government programmes that fostered the return of displaced populations to their original communities. On the other hand, the inhibited resilience of displaced or relocated participants is consistent with findings of the detrimental effects of forced displacement, for example, in migrants in Colombia's protracted war (Riaño-Alcalá, 2008) and at the end of the Nicaraguan civil conflict (Ahearn & Noble, 2004). It may be that some number of returnees are a unique group of women that left their communities before being exposed to the worst of the violence and/or may have started a healing process before returning. These and other hypotheses are important to examine in further research on forced migration during conflicts.

Additionally, this study found that membership and participation in civic associations had a positive impact on individual resilience. Study participants were members in civic associations that combined political activism and community development (e.g. associations of victims and persons displaced by the conflict, women's rights clubs, and mother's clubs) with all having a grassroots foundation. The latter suggest that half of women participants are dealing with the violence and losses they have experienced by transforming these experiences of suffering into acts of resistance. This raises an important question: *is women's resilience influencing their political participation, or is the women's political participation enhancing their resilience?* This question begs further investigation, as does the combative nature of resilience generally. As Tousignant & Sioui (2009) indicate, the resilience literature has traditionally focused on constructs from positive psychology, such as hardiness, humour, self-esteem, etc., rather than less socially desirable concepts such as rebellion and resistance, which appear to influence the resilience of marginalised individuals. Activism and the ability to support others were certainly associated with the resilience of participants in this study: '*Because of the role that I hold [in the organisation] my biggest*

satisfaction is to support others]' (C-21); *'What help me to survive is participating in several organisations'* (C-29).

Challenges and limitations

The cross-sectional design, relatively small sample size and use of convenience and purposive sampling strategies limit the generalisability of this study's findings to other post conflict contexts. There are also limitations of the content validity of the CD-RISC as the validation process of the scale pointed to local indicators of resilience (cultural identity, and capacity to reciprocate) that were not included in the instrument. The study is also limited by the lack of more qualitative elements in its design, which may have offered a better understanding of the unique experiences of participating women. Importantly, the study findings should be interpreted with caution because of the use of non-indigenous paradigms to measure indigenous resilience. Despite being guided and informed by a local advisory committee, time limitations of the study precluded the development of a locally informed instrument measuring resilience that included collective and cultural components as well as individual and social factors. However, the study methodology is congruent with Arnoso & Eiroa-Orosa's (2010) participatory framework for psychosocial studies with survivors of political violence in Latin America. In particular, the researcher visited the research location several times, trust was developed with community members and key informants, the goals of the study were prioritised with the guidance of the local advisory committee and the instruments were cross-culturally validated. Several strategies are now in use (presentations, community meetings, pamphlets, reports, etc.) to return the research findings to the community and support social action, ensuring the study has tangible impact for Quechua women living in Ayacucho. A new qualitative research project that allows Quechua women to interpret key findings

of this study is currently underway. Therefore, despite the aforementioned limitations, the study achieves local relevance and contributes to the limited number of studies of resilience in the aftermath of political violence.

The protective factors of the resilience of Quechua women examined in this study support the conceptualisation of resilience as a dynamic process, which varies across individuals and social contexts, suggesting that resilience will be better conceptualised as specific outcomes in front of specific risk situations, as indicated by Kalawski and Haz (2003). In congruency with the framework of CODINFA, the research findings of this study also highlight the importance of culture and social resources in supporting the process of resilience. The measurement of resilience in this study was, however, limited to individual resilience and did not examine community resilience which appears to be a distinctive characteristic of indigenous communities such as Aboriginal groups in Canada (Tousignant & Sioui, 2009). Yet, considering the collective foundation of the Andean culture and its remarkable resistance to colonisation and modern globalisation, one wonders if the noteworthy participation of Quechua women in civic associations and communal activities is indeed part of the survival strategies inherited from their ancestors, who also survived protracted episodes of destruction and violence.

Burack and colleagues (2007) report that the resilience of indigenous populations reflects a holistic view of individuals and communities that is difficult to capture by linear associations of protective factors, which is indeed observed in the findings of this study.

Conclusion

This research certainly suggests the endurance of Andean cultural traditions because, despite ongoing experiences of direct and structural violence, ancestral traditions of communal work on social projects still seems

to be alive in the highlands of Peru. This continuous cultural narrative, in addition to other factors, appears to underlie the agency and resilience that Quechua women displayed in response to the *sasachakuy tiempo*.

This study started with a salutogenic (focusing on factors that support human health and wellbeing) inquiry: if (and how) Quechua women were resilient after experiencing political violence? While the study focuses on the experiences of the courageous Quechua women, the question has global implications, as there is still poor understanding of the protective factors that enable women worldwide to function well in environments that are so often unsupportive. By examining the active resilience of Quechua women in response to direct and structural violence, this study enhances our understanding of the various ways women survive different types of violence during and after protracted conflicts. For instance, resilience appears to be negatively affected by a continuum of structural violence; therefore, social policies that revitalise civic society, address historical patterns of discrimination and reduce gender inequalities in education and employment, are crucial to enhance women's resilience and social repair in post conflict societies. Also of great importance is the simple acknowledgement that the resilience of Quechua women, remarkably associated with their political activism, offers an unambiguous example of women's active resistance to extreme adversity. Nguyen and colleagues (2008) identified the Palestinian concept of '*sumud*' to explain the determination to survive political violence through persistence and being deeply connected to the land. Similarly, Quechua women show us a distinctive feature of Andean resilience, the importance of having '*coraje*' (courage) and '*estar unidas*' (walking together) to survive the '*sasachakuy tiempo*' of the conflict and its aftermath. While the implications of this analysis undoubtedly cross disciplinary boundaries, they also speak of gender specific social policies and psychosocial programming in post conflict societies, too often focused on victimhood and/or alleviating distress, while disengaged from the strengths and capabilities of women survivors of war, and the injustice that persistently surrounds their lives.

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[1] Purposive sampling involves *'defining the characteristics of the persons, settings, treatments, or outcomes to which you want to generalise'* (Shadish, Cook & Campbell, 2002, p. 376). It also can be of typical or heterogeneous instances. In this study, purposive sampling of heterogeneous instances was the chosen strategy because the extensive internal migration of people in Ayacucho due to the conflict and for economic reasons, made it difficult to determine a *'typical'* Quechua-speaking person per se, without the risk of stereotyping this population.

[2] For further questions about the CD-RISC please write to the authors care of FHYPERLINK "mailto:jonathan.davidson@duke.edu" jonathan.davidson@duke.edu.

[3] PASW 18 (Predictive Analysis Software) currently known as IBM SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) is a widely used program for statistical analysis in social sciences FHYPERLINK "http://www-01.ibm.com/software/analytics/spss/" http://www-01.ibm.com/software/analytics/spss/.

Eliana Barrios Suarez, PhD, is an Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Social Work, Wilfrid Laurier University, Ontario, Canada. email: esuarez@wlu.ca