

**Being related to persons deprived of liberty: repercussions on the experiences of mothers and partners****Ter e ser familiar de pessoa privada de liberdade: repercussões na experiência de mães e companheiras****Ser miembro de la familia de una persona privada de libertad: repercusiones en la experiencia de madres e parejas****Received: 13/10/2019****Approved: 15/03/2020****Published: 01/07/2020****Maria das Graças Silva de Mendonça Calicchio<sup>1</sup>  
Reni Aparecida Barsaglini<sup>2</sup>**

This study aims to analyze the material and immaterial repercussion of deprivation of liberty of family members on the experiences of mothers and partners. This research is qualitative and exploratory, and was conducted with mothers and partners of persons deprived of liberty in a Masculine State Prison of the State of Mato Grosso in 2018. We used focus group method and comprehensive interviews, both complementary to one another, in order to acquire data; we used scripts with thematic and flexible questions, adopting non-traditional thematic analysis for data processing. We constructed two categories: Immaterial repercussions of imprisonment of a family member: continuities and discontinuities of female identity and social-moral effects; and: Material repercussions of imprisonment of family member. We noticed the following repercussions: construction of female social identity (persistence, embarrassment, humiliations, sacrifices), social-moral (shame, stigma, social exclusion) and material (rise of home expenses, difficulty to access Aid-Reclusion Benefit). Imprisonment goes beyond prison walls and reaches family members, putting tension on values, norms, duties and social, moral and financial obligations.

**Descritores:** Prisoneros; Familia; Mujeres; Prisiones.

O presente estudo tem por objetivo analisar as repercussões imateriais e materiais de privação de liberdade de familiar postas na experiência de mães e companheiras. Trata-se de uma pesquisa qualitativa e exploratória, realizada com mães e companheiras de pessoas privadas de liberdade de uma Penitenciária Estadual Masculina do Estado de Mato Grosso em 2018. Para a coleta dos dados, valeu-se das técnicas do grupo focal e da entrevista compreensiva, sendo uma complementar a outra, utilizando roteiros com questões temáticas e flexíveis, adotando-se a análise temática não tradicional para o tratamento dos dados. Foram construídas duas categorias: Repercussões imateriais do aprisionamento de familiar: continuidades e descontinuidades na identidade feminina e os efeitos sociomoraes; e, Repercussões materiais do aprisionamento de familiar. Verificou-se as seguintes repercussões: construção da identidade social da mulher (persistência, constrangimentos, humilhações, sacrifícios), sociomoraes (vergonha, estigmatização, exclusão social) e materiais (aumento das despesas domésticas, dificuldade de acesso ao Auxílio-Reclusão). O aprisionamento ultrapassa e atinge os familiares, tensionando valores, normas, deveres e obrigações sociais, morais e financeiras.

**Descritores:** Prisioneiros; Família; Mulheres; Prisões.

Este estudio tiene como objetivo analizar las repercusiones inmatrimiales y materiales de la privación de libertad de un familiar para las madres y las parejas. Se trata de una investigación cualitativa y exploratoria, realizada con madres y parejas de personas privadas de libertad en una Penitenciaría Estatal Masculina en el Estado de Mato Grosso en 2018. Para reunir los datos se utilizaron las técnicas del grupo focal y de la entrevista comprensiva, que se complementan entre sí, utilizando guiones temáticos y flexibles, adoptando análisis temáticos no tradicionales para el tratamiento de los datos. Se construyeron dos categorías: Repercusiones inmatrimiales del encarcelamiento de un familiar: continuidades y discontinuidades en la identidad femenina y efectos sociomoraes; y, Las repercusiones materiales del encarcelamiento de un familiar. Se observaron las siguientes repercusiones: construcción de la identidad social de la mujer (persistencia, azoramiento, humillación, sacrificios), sociomoral (vergüenza, estigmatización, exclusión social) y material (aumento de los gastos domésticos, dificultad de acceso al Auxilio Reclusión). El encarcelamiento va más allá y afecta a los familiares, tensando los valores, normas, deberes y obligaciones sociales, morales y financieras.

**Descritores:** Prisoners; Family; Women; Prisons.

1. Nurse. Specialist in Health Services. Specialist in Pedagogical Training for Nursing Professionals. Master in Education. PhD in Public Health. Undergraduate Professor. Professor at Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso (UFMT), Sinop / MT, Brazil. ORCID: 0000-0002-0082-374X E-mail: graca\_vit@yahoo.com.br

2. Educator. Specialist in Public Health. Specialist in Human Resources Policy for SUS Management. Master in Health and Environment. PhD in Public Health. Post Doctorate in Social and Human Sciences in Health. Associate Professor at the Instituto de Saúde Coletiva at UFMT, Cuiabá/MT, Brazil. ORCID: 0000-0002-8903-2695 E-mail: barsaglinireni@gmail.com

## INTRODUCTION

The population deprived of liberty has been on a significant rise in Brazil in the last few years, reaching 726,354 thousand people in such conditions, mostly youths and black people with low educational attainment levels<sup>1</sup>. This selective increase is worsened by the repressive conduct of the State, which based itself on the hierarchy of social layers, ethnoracial stratification and color discrimination. This is shown by the most common kinds of crime committed by the prisoners, such as patrimonial crimes and crimes related to drug trafficking, demonstrating the priorities of prison system, such as the tutelage of certain social profiles<sup>2</sup>.

The selective look of the prison system, in conjunction with a repressive and punitive inclination against the Other that exists in society, recognizes incarceration as the fulfilment of justice against those considered undesirable and dangerous. In this context, any and all prison unities work as a socially despicable repository<sup>3</sup>, a real concentration camp for the poor, a deposit of social waste<sup>4</sup>.

This reality is apparent in prison units in Brazil, given the conditions of poorly maintained cells with little to no ventilation; shortage of educational, health, nutritional, labor and leisure services; lack of personal hygiene products and clothing<sup>5</sup>; all which affects directly and significantly the daily lives of family members out of jail, especially women.

In this scenario, women are the ones that take the task of (re)connecting the person deprived of liberty to reality out of prison walls, making them the main mediators to this universe and active contributors to the construction of reality in and out of jail<sup>6</sup>. They follow all criminal procedures<sup>7</sup>, take material and immaterial responsibility for their child and/or partner and, consequently, become the source of care and protection to the incarcerated relative<sup>8</sup>.

Thus, the deprivation of liberty of a relative has repercussions beyond prison cells, and it can reach other environments and other people (other inmates, family members, staff members) that are affected by this process in some degree, according to culture and surrounding values of each family members. So, it is crucial to understand which material and immaterial repercussions mark the experiences of mothers and partners whose daily lives are composed by the incarceration of a family member.

For this study, we understand immaterial/symbolic repercussions as those experienced and perceived subjectively. the ones mediated by interpretation of feelings and emotions (suffering, sadness, embarrassment, humiliations); and material repercussions as the ones that result from means of organization and social and economic situation of people<sup>9</sup>. However, both are constructed socially and converge in the same reality, never dissociating from one another<sup>10</sup>.

Once the deprivation of liberty of a family member (or multiple family members) is placed on the fluidity of experiences of mothers and partners, it has immaterial impact on their daily chores and affects the female social identity, due to the multiple socially constructed roles - a process characterized by its ephemerality in different life cycles, as it is built in singularities and pluralities of diverse sociocultural contexts<sup>11</sup>. Hence the incarceration of a family member ties to the social identity of women, who are morally valued through pain, sadness, sacrifices, embarrassments, persistence and courage. These characteristics support the notion that a mother never abandons her child, and that partners have the obligation of protecting and caring for her family members.

This notion is made clear by the constant presence and zealous attendance of women on the queuing in prisons during visitation hours, even though it is possible to notice the presence of some men<sup>6</sup>. This makes obvious the socially expected roles of women that are kept by moral, social and financial obligation to maintain an emotional bond to an incarcerated family member.

The possible guilty parties on deprivation of liberty are morally condemned by society, due to the criminal offence committed. This condemnation breaks boundaries and reaches

family members; who become discredited, stigmatized and targets of prejudice, which causes social exclusion<sup>14,15</sup>. It is common that such situation causes feelings of shame, which affects the way of acting and thinking that are morally guided by judgement and opinions of others, while those who feel shame consider and judge themselves<sup>11</sup>.

Material repercussions in which women take charge of a great part of responsibilities in and out of jail, such as providing for the family - which drives them into new domestic (re)arraignments, taking possible debts incurred by the family member (in jail) and meeting basic needs (everyday items) due to the State's omission are not disassociated from the social-moral repercussions of the incarceration of a family member

Simultaneously, the same State makes it difficult and/or denies Aid-Reclusion Benefits to families of persons deprived of liberty, even though this benefit is guaranteed on the Social Security Benefit Plans, as proposed by the Brazilian Federal Constitution. So, the incarceration of a family member contributes significantly not only to family impoverishment, but also to feminisation of poverty, as it reflects the tendencies identified in comparative studies between men and women in general, but here is worsened by incarceration<sup>16</sup>.

With all this being said, as a result from a broader research in Colective Health<sup>17</sup>, this study aims to analyze the material and immaterial repercussions of the deprivation of liberty of family members on the perspective of the experiences of mothers and partners.

## METHOD

This is a qualitative and exploratory research. This study was carried out on the second half of 2018, consisting of ten women, five mothers and five partners of persons deprived of liberty in a Male State Penitentiary in the Northern region of the state of Mato Grosso, under the management of the State Department of Public Security of Mato Grosso (SESP-MT). This establishment is intended for the detention of men, both convicted and awaiting trial, from the Northern region of the state. According to local data, the prison unit was opened in 2006, with a capacity for 326 persons deprived of liberty; and, at the time of the research, it housed 954 people in this condition.

The participants of this study were intentionally identified, applying the criteria of being over 18 years old, being a mother and/or partner of persons deprived of liberty in a closed condition. The ten women participating in the study were invited during field observation on visitation days at the Penitentiary and during the execution of an extension project for a public higher education institution in the state of Mato Grosso.

In regards to the delimitation of the number of participants, it should be noted that, in this study, the saturation point was not taken into account at first, since the scope and diversity of the information were considered, keeping in mind that the internal logic of the proposed object of study was found<sup>18</sup>, even though temporarily.

We used techniques of focus group (FG) and comprehensive interviews for the production of data, both carried out in two different moments. In the first moment, we used the FG technique, which involved ten women (five mothers and five partners), with the intention of approaching the experience expressed in the interaction with shared common features - the deprivation of liberty of a family member.

Previous preparation<sup>19</sup> was required for the implementation of FG, such as organization and flexible utilization of script with thematic and triggering issues; choice of location; the team of researchers and volunteers; preparation dynamics; testing of the two digital recorders; the arrangement of seats for clearest possible recording. The preparation of the environment took place carefully in terms of comfort, taking into account ventilation, lighting, ease of access and acoustics.

The FG session lasted (2) hours and 15 (fifteen) minutes and was held in the meeting room of a health unit where meetings of previously mentioned extension project took place. After explaining the research, doubts and propositions of the meeting, we read and gave to

participants the Free and Clarified Consent Terms. We requested a signature in two copies, the first being delivered to each participant. The session sought not only a consensus, but disagreements and divergences of opinions and, mainly, plurality of ideas<sup>20</sup>. At the end, we made a synthesis of the main points discussed, and gave opportunity the participants to exercise their right to withdraw or add any idea.

The following step was a comprehensive interview, a pivotal way to proceed towards the experience in biographical plan of women facing incarceration of a family member. The comprehensive interview lasted, in average, two (2) hours with each woman, and was conducted through a script with thematic questions, which allowed the interlocutors to self-reflect, self-question and self-analysis while speaking with the researcher<sup>21</sup>. Thus, it was possible to deepen issues mentioned in the FG and explore the biographical singularities of the participants. However, there was one withdrawal, so nine women were interviewed at this stage (four mothers and five partners).

Time and place of the interviews were agreed on and schedule, in order to value interaction, reciprocity and respected for the participants of the study. Most preferred to be interviewed at their homes, and two of them suggested other places, such as the location where the extension project previously mentioned is developed. At the time of the interview, the rules of confidentiality, anonymity, permission for recording were reiterated.

For data treatment, content analysis<sup>22</sup> was used in the non-traditional thematic modality<sup>20</sup> through identification of cores of meaning. They were organized into a set of categories and themes, relating the common/shared characteristics, as well as characteristics that are isolated and significant to the understanding of the object of study.

The proposed research was guided by the Resolution of the National Health Council No. 466/2012, and was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Federal University of Mato Grosso, Sinop Campus, under number 2,541,865, of 03/13/2018. All names used in this paper are fictitious and chosen by the participants, followed by their relationship with the person deprived of liberty.

## RESULTS

Two categories were constructed based on the results, namely: Immaterial repercussions of incarceration of family member: continuities and discontinuities in female identity and sociomoral effects; and, Material repercussions of incarceration of family member. In the first category, we seek to unveil the female subjectivity as lived, perceived and felt by interpretations of feelings and emotions of deprivation of liberty of the family member. In the second category, the material repercussions on the family's daily life are contemplated, after the incarceration of the family member.

### **Immaterial repercussions of incarceration of family member: continuities and discontinuities in female identity**

The deprivation of liberty of a family members has an impact on the identity of the woman as a result of the suffering and sacrifices imposed by this condition (being a mother and/or partner to persons deprived of their liberty), added by the value attributed to pain and sadness; feelings that imply ambiguity at the same time, portraying that, in some situations, the suffering caused by the absence of the family member in their daily lives is overpowered by the protection offered by their incarceration:

*Being a mother of a prisoner is being in constant pain. There are times when you achieve something, a goal, something you've tried, you achieved; you feel happy, right !? But, when you remember that you have a child inside (in the penitentiary), in this situation (deprivation of liberty), it is complex [...]. (Antonella, mother).*

*Being a mother a prisoner is suffering! It means suffering, I am suffering, but I was born to face this difficulty (of having my son incarcerated), to bear that cross. (Alessandra, mother)*

*You are thankful that your husband and son are there (in the penitentiary). Better there than in the cemetery. (Vitória, mother).*

*I am happy because he is there (in the penitentiary). Because, many times, I saw drug traffickers coming to my door to kill him because of drug debt; so, I prefer it to be there. (Maria, mother).*

In the situation of deprivation of liberty, the act of non-abandoning the men is permeated by moralities, as it imposes itself as a female duty, based on the obligation to maintain family ties, as identified by the women in this study. This duty is represented by the dedication of women and their persistence in being present throughout the process of incarceration, and it is reaffirmed by their constant attendance during visitation hours, even though they recognize that their relative must pay his debt to society:

*I make it very clear to people that I talk to about this situation (the incarceration of a partner) that I will not give up on him for any reason. (Elisa, partner)*

*The situation is that I will not abandon him (the son)! I won't abandon him. Because I am the only one who goes there, to see him. I go every Sunday, every weekend is already difficult for him, imagine how would it be if I abandoned him there (in the penitentiary) [...]. I know they are in there! I know that they have to pay for the mistakes they've made, but I won't abandon him. (Alessandra, mother)*

*I won't abandon him! When he was arrested the other time, he stayed there for five years, my husband didn't go even once, I went every time. This time my husband said: you are not going there anymore! There is no way I'm not going anymore, I am going. I'll wait a while, I can't leave him there. (Vitória, mother)*

It is possible to notice care and protection through the words of the participants; a feeling that stands out in the face of embarrassments and humiliations suffered at the expense of material difficulties and institutional violence that pervade visitation day, and they keep to themselves all these experiences of deprivation of liberty of family members:

*[...] you need to be strong when you get there (at the penitentiary), you need to say that everything is fine! It's all right! Everything is okay! You have to pass security for him, right!? That it's not too bad out here! Even though you were humiliated during the inspection, you have to say that everything is fine! That it's cool! (Ana, partner)*

*You have to get there (in the penitentiary) and pretend that you ate, that everything is fine. [...]. Sometimes we are there at the door of that jailhouse, lipstick in my mouth, a bag of food, when I enter, I have to pretend to him (the partner) that everything is fine! (Mariana, partner)*

*The sociomoral repercussions expressed and experienced in daily life by the feeling of shame, or by the lack of said feeling, are evident:*

*Being a mother of a prisoner is shameful. Knowing that my son is there (in the penitentiary). (Angelina, mother)*

*I am not ashamed to say: I am a prisoner's partner! (Letícia, partner)*

*Ah, I'm already ashamed by the situation (of having my partner in prison) I'm living in! (Elisa, partner)*

In this context, once a woman keeps a bond with a person deprived of liberty, they also break the sociomoral expectations and the established order. They become "tainted" and are then associated to impurity, social marginalization, immorality, dishonesty and threats to society:

*At first, my family thought like this: oh, you're with the convict? Soon you'll be selling drugs! You'll do things you shouldn't! See if you won't be there too in a few days. That is what they thought, and they still think that of me nowadays. (Mariana, partner)*

*At first, my father didn't know; then, when he found out, he wanted me to get out of here. He didn't want me to get involved (with a prisoner). [...]. They (family members) think that, from the moment you get involved with such a person (deprived of liberty), you're not honest anymore [...]. (Ana, partner)*

Prejudice, helplessness and social isolation are ways to express the stigma and discrediting suffered by these women due to having a relative deprived of liberty. Although one of them refers to the respect and piety of her neighborhood, this does not prevent social exclusion and embarrassment in social life:

*On the streets (in the neighborhood), I face the same prejudice as you (other women participating in the FG). People comment and criticize, but they respect me and many even help me! [...]. People have pity! They pity me! But nobody visits me. This situation is very embarrassing [...]. (Elisa, partner)*

*My life hasn't been easy since the first time I set foot there! (in the penitentiary) [...]. The prejudice against me was huge! Very, very, very big! I was left out of weekend lunches because of my family's prejudice [...]. (Mariana, partner)*

*One participant highlights the prejudice she suffered at work, and she shows how to face possible discrimination, as she portrays in her speech:*

*I was fired (from work) because of that (being a prisoner's partner). But that doesn't bother me anymore! Not at all! Today, where I work, I do not deny to anyone that I am a prisoner's partner. (Leticia, partner)*

### **Material repercussions of incarceration of a family member**

Upon the deprivation of liberty of the provider, they need financial restructuring. And, in the identified case, in which the woman is the main provider and head of the family, incarceration leads her to take responsibility of expenses that did not exist before, which increasing expenses. In both situations, effectively, family income is compromised:

*My financial life has changed a lot, because when he was at home, I didn't need to work, he always gave only the best to the children and I [...]. I learned how to manage, I sold some items we had. I lived off of some money I was receiving monthly for some time, I learned to cope, to work. (Karol, partner)*

*My financial condition hardly changed, I have always supported the household, so it remains the same. Only the matter of the weekend changed, because you spend a little more, you have to bring something on visitation days[...]. (Ana, partner)*

The costs of the relative's deprivation of liberty are added to the aforementioned expenses, sometimes filling gaps in the State's absence and reflecting on the domestic family budget - in addition to possible debts incurred (within the penitentiary) in the commercial relations between others that fall, largely, on family members, as shown by the testimonies below:

*My husband works a lot, he's not paid too badly, I always worked for the things I needed and we don't get anything (material goods), because inside (the penitentiary) we always have to spend. One moment we need to pay the lawyer, then we need to pay for the bad things he does inside, and we have to pay. (Vitória, mother)*

*The financial issue hit us because we don't know how to deal with the situation, lawyers are always expensive, so you break down (financially) a lot, it's an extra expense. Besides, you have to keep him in there (in the penitentiary), because the State is only fictitious [...]. (Antonella, mother)*

*Each month you need to uphold what's there (in the penitentiary). Because there are never clothes! No shoes! There is no blankets! There is no fan! You buy and all of a sudden the System (the penitentiary) comes and throws it away! You have to take money sometimes from where you don't have it, from your budget to replace it (replacement of materials in the penitentiary) and the situation ends up being difficult (financially at home). (Ana, partner)*

With the deprivation of liberty of the child and/or partner, it is clear that women are even more penalized, as they already survive with financial difficulties, and the Aid-Reclusion Benefit could contribute financially to household expenses. However, such benefit is controversial, as it is often wrongly spoken about by broader society:

*People say what they don't know! They say what you hear! They say that every prisoner and their family, is entitled to a governmental aid. That the prisoner's family is kept by the government. One of these days a broadcaster said that nonsense. If I didn't have my working shift, I would tell her that not everyone is entitled to the benefit that is the Aid-Reclusion Benefit, and, by the way, it would help many people who need to keep them in there and those out here [...]. (Antonella, mother)*

*That is why I really needed the Reclusion Aid to help me at home, because neither my family nor his family ever gave me a penny.. My husband contributed (with INSS - Instituto Nacional do Serviço Social, Portuguese for Nacional Social Security Insititute) and the benefit did not come, the State denied it. (Elisa, partner)*

## DISCUSSION

In the experience of deprivation of liberty of family members, being a mother and/or partner sometimes affects their identities. In this regard, we considered that social identity is provisional, often built in social, historical and cultural contexts, distinct at different times in life, it is not limited, it only constitutes singularities and pluralities<sup>11</sup>.

Applying this notion to the present study, identity is not restricted to being the mother and/or partner of an incarcerated individual. It is possible to add to it configurations that are present and exist in the same person, such as being the head of family and a worker; therefore, they are not fixed, nor permanent, sometimes they can be instituted in a fragmented, contradictory and ambiguous way.

In this sense, social identity is aligned with subjective feelings according to places, perspectives and biographies of people in the social world<sup>11</sup>. It is in the context of life and in biographically determined situation that people are attested by their stories, based on all previous experiences, organized as a stock of knowledge<sup>23</sup>.

Sometimes, the identity of mothers and partners was linked to the incarceration of their family member and sacrifices, an attitude consistent with a concept called Marianismo<sup>24</sup>. This concept is linked to characteristics of women's identities, such as devotion to family, subordination to men, subservience and passivity. These idealizations attribute to women a certain moral and spiritual divinity that is superior to men's, especially with regard to resistance to pain and suffering imposed in life. However, this sacrifice gives them meaning, such as obstacles, pain, difficulties, concerns, sufferings and courage<sup>13</sup> as a result of adhering to the family member's deprivation of liberty.

The sacrifice imposed by incarceration, due to the absence of the entity in the mother and/or partner's daily life, in several situations, is surpassed by the protective factor offered by incarceration. With this in mind, the prison unit represents protection for the lives of people deprived of liberty<sup>25</sup>, regardless of unhealthy conditions, overcrowding and other situations. In contexts of social inequality and the selective nature of the Brazilian penal system, even recognized by the State itself, being incarcerated can mean some protection to this group target to deprivation of liberty<sup>2</sup>.

Thus, there is a symbolic order to the feminine that associates the idea of a mother never abandoning her child and that the partner also has the obligation to protect and care. In the context of deprivation of liberty, the totality of feminine presence in social spaces makes these socially expected roles very clear.

There are also studies that show the conviction of women to not abandon incarcerated men, based on the obligation to be/close /enter the incarceration journey - along with the family member - and based on consanguinity and similar relationships<sup>12,13</sup>. As shown by the participants, dedication, persistence and regularity of visits are clear signs of these socially expected roles, due to the obligation of maintaining affection for the incarcerated person. Thus, the prisoner can count on his family members, that is, it is the family networks that establish

the support offered, the moral obligations that, in most cases, maintain the emotional bonds with a person deprived of liberty<sup>12</sup>.

Hence, the social changes related to the occupation of public space by women, with more frequency and intensity, are not enough to deconstruct their capability to create, care for, protect and keep the family group going<sup>24</sup>. The discourse of the importance of women in the domestic space identified in maternity, with the care of children, adds to this posture; however, the place of women in poor families is always one of protagonism and moral authority<sup>12</sup>.

In the situation of deprivation of liberty of a family member, cultivated feminine skills are reaffirmed through care and protection for partners. Women insist on reserving all the hardships of the relative's incarceration for themselves, despite the constraints and humiliations in the face of material difficulties and institutional violence suffered during the humiliating inspection.

In the deprivation of liberty of family members, women sympathize with them, sacrifice themselves and welcome them, showing a certain discontinuity in their daily lives, but reaffirming, reinforcing and continuing the social constructions of what is up to them as women, whether they are mothers or partners in connection with the assorted sociomoral repercussions.

Regarding sociomoral repercussions of family incarceration in the daily lives of mothers and partners, it is necessary to consider morality as setting of the feeling of obligation, regardless of the rule contemplated, as morality is always a certain morality; therefore, certain values, principles and rules are enforced. The values internalized by people vary according to places occupied in society and come from the socialization process, mobilizing, directing their actions (interpretive, practical) and generating feelings in which duties and obligations are valued<sup>11</sup>.

Thus, when moral rules break, for example, the involvement of a person with crime, moral violation is not restricted only to those who practiced it, it is not limited to the prison walls, it is passed on to family members<sup>15</sup>. In the situation of incarceration, ambivalence is given, that is, the person deprived of liberty tends to be discredited and associated with his stigma; and his family members are called discreditable; therefore, the effect of stigma is extended to family members who go from being discreditable to being discredited<sup>14</sup>, depending on the space where they are inserted, such as the penitentiary on visitation days.

The feelings of shame and not being ashamed are related to the way people act and think (morally), as attested by expressions<sup>11</sup>. Shame involves several axes, among them shame and immorality or judgment of others. The latter is triggered by people's (almost always negative) opinions, related to external control/circumstances, as in the case of the deprivation of liberty of the entity. It also involves an internal control, considering that those who are ashamed end up judging themselves as an act of reflection<sup>11</sup>.

For the human experience, taken as the sum of experiences, to be meaningful, it requires a reflection about its own acts and thoughts. However, people can go through the same experience simultaneously, but the knowledge produced from this experience is different<sup>23</sup>. As much as the object of the experience is the same, it appears differently for each person, considering that each person has a situation that is their own, according to their biographical situation and their stock of knowledge, available at any time of daily life, serving of interpretations to their experiences<sup>23</sup>.

Criminality, considered in broad society as a category that manifests itself as moral disapproval<sup>15</sup>, generates disorder, and leaves those who violated the order isolated (deprived of liberty), since this is the only way to avoid social contamination<sup>3</sup>. The maintenance of affection with a family member in deprivation of liberty leads women to break moral order and sociomoral expectations, and this makes them immoral, dishonest, impure and a threat to society.

The maintenance of the emotional bonds of women with a person deprived of liberty generates a series of consequences in their social realities. They are always defamed or considered guilty for a crime they did not commit, and they need to reaffirm their innocence or trust<sup>3</sup> in their daily lived. The experience of having a family member deprived of their liberty is experienced through stigma and prejudice, reflecting on social exclusion, especially by the family and the neighborhood. In opposition to this, one of the participants mentioned the respectability and piety of neighbors. However, constraints and isolation stand out in social life.

The incarceration of a family member also affects work relations, so that the majority of those surveyed prefer informal work, as they need flexible hours for weekly visits to prison institutions.

In addition to this, it is preferable for them to omit this condition in their workplaces<sup>26</sup>, due to the possibility of suffering discrimination for being the mother and/or partner of a prisoner. Hiding a condition (which constitutes an identity mark) shows the stigma operating in relationships and an effort to avoid its consequences.

Sociomoral repercussions are not linked only to the person incarcerated, given the relational logic present in the family dynamics that predominates in the social segment targeted by incarceration in the Brazilian context. In addition to the immaterial effects, no less important (and not dissociated), the material repercussions of the relative's incarceration are also felt.

Regarding the material repercussions of deprivation of liberty of a family member, and considering the close link between mass incarceration in Brazil and criminal selectivity<sup>2</sup>, it should be remembered that the increase in incarceration affects substantially the poorest, marginalized social layer, reproduces the abandonment and repressive social control by the State among the socially excluded. With the incarceration of one or more members in the family, social inequalities and the violation of social rights<sup>4</sup> tend to increase even more in the current context in Brazil.

The deprivation of liberty of a family member affects the family income and compromises the fulfillment of basic needs of the family (healthcare, nutrition, housing, education, among others) and contributes even more to financial scarcity of people from poor social layers, leading them to the vicious cycle of poverty<sup>2</sup> and keeping them there.

Deprivation of liberty of a family member transfers to women several responsibilities of also providing materially for the family, leading them to take charge and support the domestic budget. This directly implies a reduction in family income due to maintenance of household expenses combined with those of the family member in the penitentiary. But, at the same time, on the other hand, it can make them more financially independent<sup>27</sup>, when they can manage resources due to the absence of the family member. In addition, when crime generates economic gains and shows an easy and quick way of obtaining financial resources, the family often benefits from these illegally acquired assets (house, car and others), although financial maintenance depends on the continuity of illegal activity that can protect and expose the family to the same risks as the prisoner.

The scenario of deprivation of liberty of a family member affects the structures of poor families, generating unemployment or layoff due to discrimination, burdening the household budget and leading women to take charge economic responsibility, becoming the head of family and the house. Therefore, incarceration contributes significantly to the feminization of poverty<sup>28</sup> as, taking into account the number of poor people in the country, most are women<sup>29</sup>.

The weekly visitors acquire an additional financial burden with expenses of transportation (trip to penitentiary), payment of fees in local luggage storages (helmets, bags and cell phones), purchase of products (food and hygiene) in the regular market inside the prison unit, medicines, clothes, shoes, blankets, fans, cigarettes, as well as any items available in the informal market that operates internally among the incarcerated population, and others<sup>17</sup>. The deprivation of liberty of one or more family members requires new

(re)arrangements in the domestic budget, especially when that person contributed financially and/or was the main provider, having a significant impact on the family's livelihood<sup>8</sup>.

The State makes it difficult and/or denies Aid-Reclusion Benefits to families of persons deprived of their liberty, as shown by the testimonies. Such aid is guaranteed by the Brazilian Federal Constitution, according to Law No. 8,213, on Social Security Benefit Plans, and it is highlighted as one of the rights of people financially dependent of an insured person incarcerated in a semi-open or closed condition, and in line with the last monthly paid salary received by the prisoner<sup>30</sup>.

Aid-Reclusion Benefit is controversial, as it mention in a wrong way in the sayings that circulate in broad society, as access is restricted and bureaucratic, but it constitutes social protection. Families (and especially women), who already survive on financial hardship, are even more penalized, as it is the poor and black people who represent the phenomenon of mass incarceration<sup>4</sup>, also in Brazil.

The deprivation of liberty of the family member has material repercussions on family life, further compromising the living and working conditions of people from the historically and socio-culturally are already vulnerable (women, poor, black women, with low education attainment levels).

## CONCLUSION

The immaterial and material repercussions of deprivation of liberty intertwine and surpass prison walls, go beyond cells and affect family members and, particularly, women. It turns out that the consequences can vary on type and intensity, but they mark life experiences. Mothers and partners are present throughout the course of the deprivation of liberty of their family member, maintaining/sustaining their moral obligations imposed by social roles attributed to them historically and that go beyond prison walls, with great difficulty.

In the scenario of family incarceration, it is evident that cultural and social values attributed to the female gender intertwine to show that, in the private domestic space, they are responsible for the socialization and maintenance of the family, which continues even in the situation of helplessness of one (or more) son or partner.

Interactions in the context of deprivation of liberty of a family member are rearranged in the interstices of the rules that conduct private and public universe, putting pressure on hierarchies and renegotiating duties and obligations that continued in one moment and discontinued the next. In public spaces, women can act as intermediaries and protagonists in the extramural relations of prisons, remaining as a family support and fulfilling gaps left by the State in regards of its ambivalence, which can represent both protection and threat.

The repercussions of the deprivation of liberty of a family member are not restricted to the individual, but reach the person, that is, the relationships in which family members are represented by women. The immateriality and materiality of the repercussions are not dissociated because they out pressure on social, moral and financial values, norms, duties and obligations, based on their respective meanings in concrete social interactions. These repercussions come from the conditions in which the sentence is served, with violations of the inmates' social rights, as well as from social control that is carried out by the prison institution in the Brazilian context of historical social inequalities.

We consider limitations of this study the fact that the research was carried out only with family members from the municipality where the prison unit is located, as well as the fact that it did not mentioned the repercussions for other family members. However, this did not prevent us from recognizing that the immaterial and material repercussions of the deprivation of liberty of family members are placed in the experience of women, especially in mothers and partners.

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#### CONTRIBUTIONS

**Maria das Graças de Mendonça Silva Calicchio** contributed with collection, analysis and interpretation of data, as well as conception, writing and revision. **Reni Aparecida Barsaglini** participated in orientation, analysis and revision..

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