

# THE SUICIDAL METHODS USED BY THE PATIENTS WITH SCHIZOPHRENIA

SĂLCUDEAN ANDREEA<sup>1</sup>, BUICU GABRIELA<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1, 2</sup>University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Tg. Mures

**Keywords:**  
schizophrenia, suicide

**Abstract:** This paper aims to analyze the logistical means and methods used by patients with schizophrenia to achieve suicidal act. The basis of this study is a retrospective study on a total of 53 subjects diagnosed with various forms of schizophrenia, who during 2000 to 2009 died suiciding. The analysis of the methods used by schizophrenic people in achieving suicidal act defined two ways, one of was violent and the other one nonviolent both with the same fatal result. It is considered necessary to implement standardized assessment criteria to evaluate suicide on a global scale, going over the differences from one country to another in labeling a death as self-inflicted.

**Cuvinte cheie:**  
schizofrenie, suicid

**Rezumat:** Lucrarea de față își propune analiza logistică a metodelor și mijloacelor utilizate de pacienții cu schizofrenie în realizarea actului suicidal. La baza acestei lucrări se află un studiu retrospectiv pe un număr de 53 de subiecți diagnosticați cu diverse forme de schizofrenie, care între anii 2000-2009 au decedat prin suicid. Analiza logistică a metodelor și mijloacelor utilizate de schizofrenici în realizarea actului suicidal, a delimitat două metode, din care una a fost violentă și a doua nonviolentă ambele având același rezultat fatal. Se consideră necesară implementarea unor criterii standardizate de evaluare a suicidului care să fie folosite pe scară globală, trecând peste diferențele existente de la o țară la alta în domeniul etichetării unui deces ca fiind autoprovocat

## INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, the autolitic behavior, raised and still raises many issues: moral, religious, ethical, philosophical, sociological, forensic, psychological, psychiatric, medical and other (2, 5, 7). Suicide, as universal as other positive or negative, destructive behavior, is unique but is determined by many factors as Durkheim says (4): "Every society is prone to provide a determined contingent of voluntary deaths." Suicide by its finality is the most devastating experience of medical practice and especially psychiatric. He was and still is considered a sign of a mental disorder and occupies an important place among causes of death of patients with mental illness.

Schizophrenia is clearly a multifactorial disease that is probably caused by a variety of disorders of the structure, physiology and biochemistry of the brain. In most cases schizophrenic begins between adolescents and young age and the patients with this pathology have a lower life expectancy (1). The group suicidal risk factors in schizophrenia fall the very severe disease with numerous relapses and hospitalizations, premorbid and current poor social integration, the onset of depression and depression postpsychotic, interactive hallucinations, toxic abuse, panic attacks, the presence of a history of attempted, suicide recent hospitalization marked by medication side effects (dyskinesia, malignant neuroleptic syndrome).

## THE AIM OF THE STUDY

This paper aims to analyze the logistical means and methods used by patients with schizophrenia to achieve suicidal act.

## MATERIAL AND METHOD

The data presented are part of a larger study. The research was conducted in psychiatric clinic no. I and in the Institute of Forensic Medicine of Tg. Mureș. 794 suicides were studied, of which 53 had a diagnosis of schizophrenia according to DSM IV-TR criteria, in the record of the Clinic of Psychiatry No I. Demographic factors were investigated: age, sex and the methods and means used in achieving the suicidal act.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

We began by assessing quantitative research in the Archives IML Tg.Mureș. Research has continued to psychiatric clinic I Tg.Mureș, by studying the case report forms belonging to people with schizophrenia who committed suicide. Diagnosis of the 53 cases of schizophrenic people who died by suicide between 2000-2009, conducted by the diagnostic criteria listed in DSM IV-TR, reveals that by the total of 794 suicides 53 of them were schizophrenic representing a share of 6.68%. I have made a grouping of data found by age, to see if our research data coincide with the speciality literature, which shows the highest risk for suicide aged between 20-30 years. We noted that 29 (54.72%) were in the age of 18-30, 13 (24.53%) between 31-50 years and the remaining 11 (20.75%) over 50 years. Fig. no. 1 The data obtained by us (54.72%), partly overlapp with data from literature.

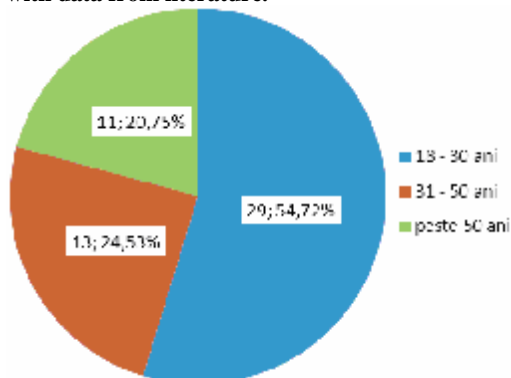
From the 53 of the schizophrenic deaths by suicide, 40 (75.47%) were male and 13 (25.53%) female. Higher incidence of suicide in men than in women is explained by some authors in particular biological structures from the repertoire of sexual behavior, by analogy with male heteroagresivity reflected in higher rates of male crime (2.3). In fact, most authors highlight the fact that

<sup>1</sup>Autor Correspondent: Andreea Sălcudean, str. Mitropolit Andrei Șaguna, nr. 16, Târgu Mureș, România; e-mail: andreea.salcudean@yahoo.com; tel +40-071264572

Articol intrat în redacție în 28.03.2011 și acceptat spre publicare în 1.08.2011  
ACTA MEDICA TRANSILVANICA Septembrie 2011; 2(3)484-486

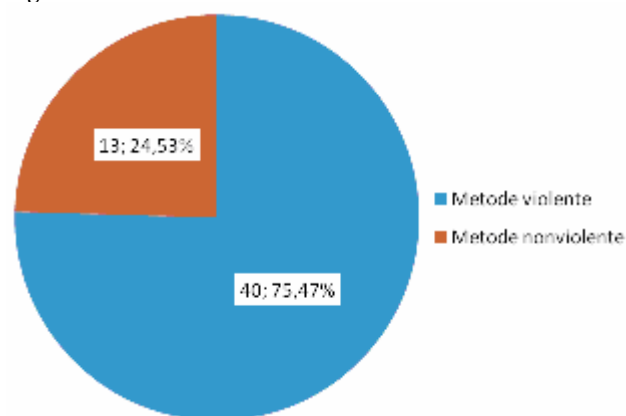
70% of all schizophrenic suicides are men and 30% are women (2.7). Hunt revealed in a study conducted in England, that suicidal acts by patients with schizophrenia were more violent ways of dying than other people died by suicide.

**Figure. no. 1. Data obtained by us (54.72%), partly overlap with data from literature.**



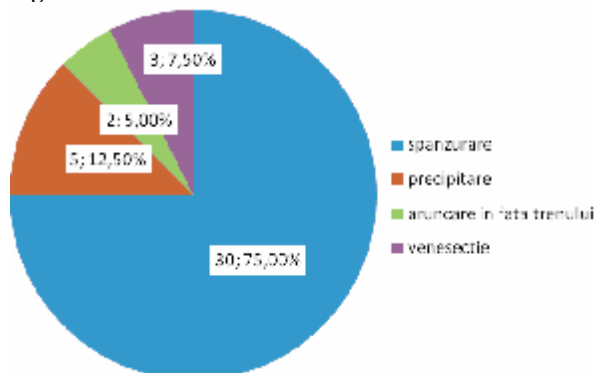
Analyzing the methods and means used by schizophrenics in achieving suicidal act, we defined two ways of the autolitic means, one of which is violent and the other nonviolent with the same fatal result. The analysis of autolitic means showed that patients in our group who used violent suicidal methods were 75%.

**Figure. no. 2. Methods of suicide**



From the violent suicide methods: first stood hanging with 30 cases, followed in decreasing order: precipitation with 5 cases, throwing in front of the train or other means of fast moving with two cases, cutting veins 3 cases.

**Figure. no. 3. Violent methods**

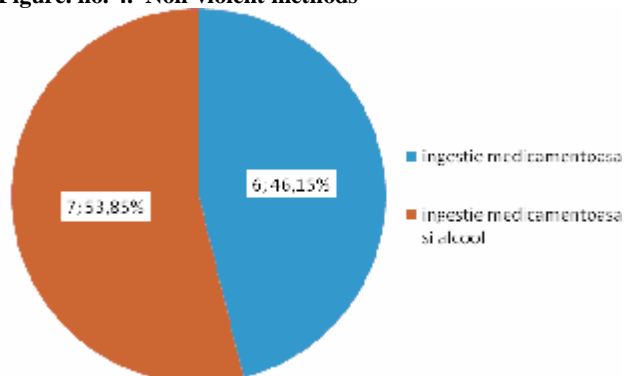


Young age causes an increased risk in choosing violent methods, which is found in our study. Analyzing the age

of subjects we noted that 24 men (66.67%) were in the age between 18-30 years, 10 men, aged 31-50 (27.78%) remaining 2 years and 50 years (5.56%). Males and younger age were risk factors in the choice of violent methods. In many of the victims, suicide was an unpredictable and paradoxical act done under the influence of self-harm impulses, which occurred during some panic, or ordered by hallucinations. Compared to the means used, it was observed that higher rate of suicide in men is related to the fact that they choose more violent and more secure methods (hanging, precipitation. Traditionally it is considered that the main means violent autolitic are traumatic (gunshot, precipitation), asphyxia (submersion, hanging) and the non-violent are toxic (drug intake).

Nonviolent methods were used by 13 schizophrenics. The most common and frequent method was carried out by drug overdose used by six patients (neuroleptics, tranquilizers, antidepressants, barbiturates, beta blockers, alone or in combination with each other and / or alcohol, 7 used by patients. Fig. 4

**Figure. no. 4. Non-violent methods**



The distribution according to the sex of the patients who have chosen suicide as a way of nonviolent method was as follows: 4 males (30.77%) and 9 females (69.23%). Women tend to seek less lethal autolitic methods, thus the non-pronouncements of the suicides in these cases even put the question whether the sex ratio for male net (the suicide made) is not in part the consequence of this degree is underreporting of suicide in women. We believe that the most common use for the purpose of suicidal the overdose of lethal agents is facilitated by the small difficulty with which you can buy neuroleptics, antidepressants, tranquilizers, barbiturates and others. Thus, nowadays, ingestion of drugs has become the most common way of suicide, being recorded in 30% of the cases investigated.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The autolytic attempts of the schizophrenics are always serious and often use brutal methods, sometimes bizarre, which can be done in the presence of unrestrained impulses. If the female sex and older age of the studied cases used nonviolent suicidal methods, on the contrary young age causes an increased risk in the choice of violent methods. These data show, to some extent, that old age in males and females is special factors favoring the use of medicinal purposes suicidal overdose. Although many authors show that most schizophrenic suicide by nonviolent methods, from our observations that violent methods and especially hanging were the most frequently encountered (30 to 56.6%).

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