

# SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE MOST RELEVANT ARTICLES REGARDING INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE

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**Keywords:** aggression, violence, trauma, costs

**Abstract:** The paper offers the professionals of medical and social and human sciences a brief picture of the phenomenon of interpersonal aggression, its causes and its health and social consequences as reflected by the most cited articles on on-line databases. The documentation is based on on-line exploration of medical periodicals' sites, medical publishers' sites, as well as of larger databases (Lancet, MEDLINE/PubMed, Scopus SciVere, ScienceDirect, from 2007 to November 2013), official documents, full versions of papers presented at different congresses, conferences and specialized seminars. There have been studied a number of 55 trials, of which 12 have been selected. The selection of studies was made in accordance with the primary variables: aggression, violence, trauma, costs. Meta-analyses, systematic reviews and articles published in peer reviewed journals were preferred.

**Cuvinte cheie:** agresivitate, violență, traumatisme, costuri

**Rezumat:** Articolul oferă profesioniștilor din domeniul științelor socio-umane și medicale o imagine succintă a fenomenului agresivității interpersonale, a cauzelor și consecințelor sale medicale și sociale așa cum sunt ele reflectate de către cele mai citate articole ale bazelor de date on-line. Documentarea s-a făcut prin explorarea site-urilor proprii ale periodicelor medicale, ale editurilor medicale, precum și baze de date mai mari (Lancet, Medline/PubMed, SciVerse Scopus, ScienceDirect, în perioada 2007-noiembrie 2013) documente oficiale, variante in extenso ale lucrărilor prezentate la congrese, conferințe și seminarii de specialitate. Au fost luate în studiu un număr de 55 studii, din care au fost selectate 12 studii. Selecția studiilor s-a făcut în conformitate cu variabilele primare: agresivitate, violență, traumatisme, costuri. Au fost preferate articolele care comunică meta-analize și sinteze sistematice, precum și articolele publicate în reviste peer reviewed.

## INTRODUCTION

Aggression and violence are manifestations of behaviour that accompanied the historical evolution of human societies, inextricably linked to the biological and social functioning of the individual. The efforts to identify the etiology and to develop effective strategies to combat these phenomena have imposed a strict nosological classification, and an operational definition of these concepts. Nosological classifications of the two concepts are relative, both spatially and temporally, being strongly influenced by the historical, cultural and social determinants of the societies, by the social or political background influences, by the variety of their manifestation forms and sanctioning mode.

## PURPOSE

The paper offers the professionals of medical and social and human sciences a brief picture of the phenomenon of interpersonal aggression, its causes and its health and social consequences as reflected by the most cited articles on on-line databases.

## METHODS

### Selection criterion for the studies

The documentation is based on on-line exploration of medical periodicals' sites, medical publishers' sites, as well as of larger databases (Lancet, MEDLINE/PubMed, Scopus SciVere, ScienceDirect, from 2007 to November 2013), official documents, full versions of papers presented at different

congresses, conferences and specialized seminars. There have been studied a number of 55 trials, of which 12 have been selected. The selection of studies was made in accordance with the primary variables: aggression, violence, trauma, costs. Meta-analyses, systematic reviews and articles published in peer reviewed journals were preferred.

### Report on alcohol and health in 35 European countries in 2013

*World Health Organization (1)*

The paper is based on the studies conducted in 35 countries, including the European Union (including Croatia), EU candidate countries (Iceland, Montenegro, Serbia, Macedonia and Turkey), Norway and Switzerland. The countries were grouped by cultural patterns of alcohol consumption. The research aimed at the effects of alcohol at different age groups. The age groups most exposed to the harmful consequences of alcohol consumption belong to the interval 16-34 years old, for which more than 20% of deaths among men and 14% of deaths in women are attributable to alcohol consumption. The main causes are traffic accidents, mechanical trauma and suicide. Globally, between 1/3 and 1/7 of the accidental deaths are related to alcohol, accounting for approximately 1,700 deaths annually.

### Anatomy of violence: A study of the literature. D. Mider (2)

The authors performed a systematic analysis of the concept of transdisciplinary and violence in human societies. The article provides a framework for understanding the phenomenon of violence in areas like sociology, political

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science, anthropology, philosophy. There are addressed and examined in a different manner, two approaches of the definitions of the concept of violence. The "narrow" definition of violence is characteristic especially to the political sciences, where violence is defined as the use of "unauthorized" (unlawful) physical force. The "wide" definition of violence is associated with sociology, anthropology and philosophy. The authors point out that the definition of violence depends on the scope and content.

**Criterion problem in the evaluation of the aggressive behaviour: Development of a new taxonomic system** *DJ Parrott, P. R. Giancola (3)*

The authors draw the attention to the fact that the operational definitions of the aggressive behaviour and its subtypes are frequently misinterpreted and are lacking the conceptual clarity. Secondly, as a result of the difficulties of nosological classification, the assessment tools are not always the appropriate ones. The authors propose a new taxonomic system corresponding to a "hybrid" definition of the aggressive behaviour enabling a greater accuracy in assessing aggression and lead to improved theories, diagnostic systems and clinical interventions.

**Human dignity and vulnerability: An ethical framework for forensic practice** *T. Ward, K. Syversen (4)*

This article presents an integrated ethical framework covering different levels of ethical tasks inherent in the forensic work. Secondly, the authors analyze the concept of dignity and its relation with the operational conceptual and normative regulations in the field of the forensic field. Thirdly, the authors explore the ability of the codes of ethics and the current medical practice to integrate the concepts of dignity and vulnerability in the medical practice. Fourthly, there are discussed solutions through which the conflicts between rules and principles can be surmounted by practitioners, observing both of them efficiently in the light of the dignity model. Fifthly, there are offered explanatory models of the individual ethical judgments that integrate the present framework.

**The forensic patient relationship: a three-dimensional model** *L. Chudzík, F. Aschieri (5)*

The paper refers to forensic patients who committed sexual offenses or violence and are forced (in some countries) to follow a programme of psychotherapy during the detention and reintegration into the community. The authors underline the appropriateness of behavioral therapy programmes, addressed within a complex team (patient, therapist, social control authority). There are also addressed the factors that can facilitate or hinder the success of the therapy programme.

**Evaluation of the prevalence of cases of abuse and violence from the part of the partner (PRAISE) in the orthopedic clinics: a multinational prevalence survey** *Heidi Stöckl, Karen Devries et al. (6)*

PRAISE is the largest specialized study undertaken in 12 orthopedic clinics in Canada, USA, Netherlands, Denmark and India, on a sample of 2945 women. The patients filled out the WAST and PVS questionnaires to identify the cases of physical, emotional or sexual abuse. There were also estimated the levels of risk for the physical, psychological or sexual abuse. PRAISE researchers claim that one in six women presenting in the orthopedic clinics has a history of physical abuse and one in 50 women is hospitalized for a mechanical trauma secondary to the domestic violence. Compared with the women in Canada and USA, India, those from Netherlands and Denmark are at a significantly lower risk of abuse of any kind.

The authors of the article urge the orthopedic specialists to be actively involved in identifying the cases of domestic violence and to help improving the response of health

services for the victims of the domestic abuse.

**The effect of economic crises and alternative policy interventions on public health in Europe: an empirical analysis** *D. Stuckler, S. Basu, M. Suhrcke, A. Coutts (7)*

The authors studied the relation between the periods of economic crisis with the specific mortality rates in the EU. It was described an increase up to 79% of suicides below the age of 65, at the same time with an increase by 1% of the unemployment rate, its effects being partially influenced by the differences in social protection. By contrast, road traffic deaths have decreased by 1-39% during the same periods of time. The article points out the importance of the reinsertion programmes for workers on the labour market that could mitigate some adverse effects of the economic recession on health.

**Social context of human aggression: We pay much attention to gender differences?** *D.S. Richardson, G.S. Hammock (8)*

The authors performed a comparative study of the aggressive events in the two genders considering that the classical approach of human aggression overestimates the importance of gender differences. They explored: a) the impact of the "gender" variable as a predictor of the aggressive behaviour; b) the differences due to gender in the typology of aggression (direct or indirect); c) differentiated approach to aggression in the context of the interpersonal relationships; (d) the effects due to gender differences in the manifestation of the psychological aggression. The research results highlight that the "gender" variable has relatively small effects on the aggressive behaviour and that the impact of gender differences is strongly influenced by the context in which the aggressive action takes place.

**Interpersonal relationships and behaviour: via the functional variations in genes** *T. Kurrikoff (9)*

The authors objectified the behavioural consequences of the changes in genes 5-HTTLPR ex1f-VNTR and ADRA2A CC, regarded as "risk genes", due to the influence of family and social environmental factors. The study results indicate that the adolescents with 5-HTTLPR alleles, especially males, are more prone to an impulsive maladaptive behaviour in a less supportive family environment. Within the same context, the allele girls are more susceptible to the preservation of behavioural disorders in adulthood. In the absence of communication problems in the family and social environment, the allele girls rarely develop depressive disorders.

However, the author supports the view of Monroe & Reid (2008) according to which, the instruments measuring depression in allele girls with no history of interpersonal conflict should be more rigorous. Thus, the authors stress that family environment plays an important modulator of s-allele effect on behaviour. The study also assessed the effect ex1f-VNTR gene polymorphism involved in the synthesis of neuronal nitric oxide. The subjects with alleles genotype had neurotic symptoms and the male subjects showed increased impulsivity.

In an environment considered hostile, the subjects with s/s genotype showed increased tendencies to impulsivity, but these reactions are significantly influenced by gender, and the men with genotype 1/1 and allele women have experienced depressive symptoms and anxiety. In adolescents with ADRA2A CC genotype, the different degrees of abuse in the family environment were associated with different scores of the ADHD subscales, demonstrating the influence of the environment on the noradrenergic neurotransmission.

The authors emphasize the role of family environmental influences in shaping a karyotype risk for behavioural disorders in adolescents and the fact that the malleability effects of genotype on behaviour cannot be

attributed to a single gene.

**Exposure to domestic violence: A meta-analysis of child and adolescent development** S.E. Evans, C. Davies, D. DiLillo (10)

This study used a meta-analysis of a total number of 60 studies in order to examine the relations between children's exposure to domestic violence and the development of posttraumatic symptomatology. The study findings highlight weighted values of 0.48 and 0.47 for the relation between exposure to domestic violence and the appearance of symptoms (internalizing / externalizing symptoms) during childhood. Significant higher scores were recorded among boys. The analysis of the exposure to violence depending on child's age did not reveal significant differences.

**Parliamentary Committee for Health - Preliminary Report. Alcohol** U.K. Parliament House of Commons. Commission for Health (11)

A document issued by the House of Commons of the English Parliament confirms the contribution of alcohol in traffic accidents, domestic and occupational accidents, and also as a predisposing factor for violence and disturbing social order. A study conducted in the majority of UK emergency departments showed that 70% of the patients addressed at night and 40% of the casuistry during the day is attributed to alcohol.

**Alcohol and violence. Report** Faculty of Public Health of the Royal Colleges of Medicine in the United Kingdom (12)

The report presents a meta-analysis of several studies in the last decade in the UK and Wales. The results of studies reveal that alcohol causes about 1.2 million violent incidents and about 50% of homicides. According to Finney (2004, cited by the authors), a total of 116,000 employees of the national health system are assaulted annually by patients or their relatives under the influence of alcohol. The studies identified as a risk group for harmful alcohol consumption, the age group ranging from 16-29 years old (Budd, op. Cit.) According to the Strategy Unit (op. Cit.), about 19,000 sexual abuses occur annually as a result of alcohol consumption, and 58% of the deprivation of freedom are due to rape, many offenders being under the influence of alcohol at the time of the offense (Finney, 2004, op. cit.). In England and Wales, 15-25% of suicides and 65% of the autolytic attempts are associated with alcohol, and in Scotland, 53% of patients who required psychiatric care after attempted suicide had a history of alcohol abuse, according to a study communicated by Alcohol Concern (op.cit.).

Walby and Allen (2004, op. Cit) identify over 10% of emergency services casuistry in the UK as being due to trauma secondary to interpersonal aggression. The annual costs of the alcohol-related social consequences are estimated at £ 7.3 bn, plus approximately £ 1.7 bn at which the medical care costs are added (Strategy Unit, 2003). In Scotland, the problems caused by alcohol use are estimated at over 1.5% of GDP (Scottish Executive Central.

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