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Male Youths' Perceptions, Knowledge and Beliefs of Alcohol Misuse and HIV Prevention

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Abstract

This study investigated alcohol misuse associated with risky sexual behavior, which poses a challenge in South Africa, where the rate of HIV transmission is high. Southern Africa faces the challenge of HIV risk behavior, which is linked to the misuse of alcohol. The use of the qualitative research methodology was appropriate, as the researchers were interested in gaining a deeper insight into and understanding of male youth's perceptions. The findings also indicate that alcohol has a negative impact on HIV prevention. Unprotected sex, which is connected to alcohol misuse, is one of the ways in which the HIV pandemic is perpetuated. We recommend that a policy should be developed and implemented, with regards to the integration school programs on HIV and alcohol use, in order to enable young people to prevent HIV infection. Raise ongoing awareness of alcohol abuse in communities, in order to reduce the rates of HIV transmission.

Keywords: AIDS, masculinity, misuse, risky behavior, unprotected sex.

1. Introduction

This paper presents a study that investigated alcohol misuse associated with risky sexual behaviour, which poses a challenge in South Africa, where the HIV transmission rate is high. Literature shows that Southern Africa is faced with the challenge of HIV risk behaviour that is linked to the misuse of alcohol (Kalichman, Simbayi, Kaufman, Cain & Jooste, 2007; Majozi 2009). Kalichman, Simbayi, Kaufman and Jooste (2006) report that the percentage of males who engage in sexual intercourse after using alcohol is higher than that of females, which is 56% and 25% respectively. The higher percentage of male youths consuming alcohol in the sexual context necessitated the current study, because some of them have unprotected sex with unfamiliar partners. It is partly for this reason that this research was conducted at the Health and Welfare Organisation in Soshanguve, Gauteng province, where there are male youths who attend HIV prevention programmes. Kalichman et al. (2006) support this claim by highlighting the urgency of HIV prevention interventions in South Africa. HIV prevention intervention strategies should also address the influence of alcohol on the spread of HIV.

A study conducted by Parry, Rehm and Morojele (2010) confirm that there is conclusive evidence to link alcohol use with the spread of HIV. In South Africa, an individual who drinks alcohol consumes on average 20 litres of alcohol per year, which is the highest volume compared to other countries in the world. Kalichman et al. (2007) report that about 40% of South African males consume more alcohol, and indulge in HIV risk behaviour, compared to about 15% of their female counterparts. The age group that was targeted for the study is said to be at greater risk of contracting HIV, which is influenced by alcohol misuse, yet they are an appropriate age for HIV prevention programmes. Therefore, many of them can be reached by HIV prevention messages before they contract the virus.

- Alcohol has a negative impact on HIV prevention.
- There is a lack of knowledge among male youth regarding the risk factors that lead to HIV infection, including the abuse of substances such as alcohol.
- Many of these youths do not associate this with HIV/AIDS, and if they do not have knowledge, it becomes difficult for them to look after themselves and others.
- Male youths think of themselves as being invincible, as if they “*may not*” be infected with HIV. It is egocentrism that leads to personal myths, which cause some male youths to engage in risky sexual behaviour, such as having sex without using a condom.
- The information gathered during the face-to-face interviews could be used to improve the HIV prevention programme of the organisation.
- The main recommendations include the following: a policy should be developed and implemented; there should be formal, integrated school programmes on HIV, in order to enable young people with regard to HIV prevention.
- Moreover, gender dynamics and cultural issues should be addressed, as people have used them incorrectly to their sexual benefit, which has in turn resulted in the spread of HIV. In addition, raise ongoing awareness of alcohol abuse in communities, in order to reduce the rates of HIV transmission.

The misuse of alcohol poses a significant health risk to an individual, especially in the era of the AIDS pandemic. A study conducted by Weir, Pailman, Mahlalela, Coetzee, Meidany and Boerna (2003) in a Cape Town township found that 94% of the people who participated in the study reported that places which sell alcohol were the most common places where people met new casual sex partners. Furthermore, the above study indicates that only 60% of these research participants had used a condom during their last sexual encounter. The 40% of people who did not use condoms during sex were at risk of contracting HIV if any of their partners were infected with the virus. Kalichman et al. (2007) report that males are more likely to drink than females, and then to have unprotected sex with different partners. Such behaviors put male youths at risk of contracting HIV, especially when they are under the influence of alcohol.

2. Literature review

2.1 *Initiation into alcohol consumption and subsequent misuse*

Recent trends show that youths living in cities start drinking as young as 13 years of age (Stueve & O'Donnell, 2005). The age at which youths start drinking alcohol plays a role in terms of their immediate and long-term risk-taking behavior. Some youths who start drinking alcohol during adolescence tend to have alcohol misuse and dependency problems for the rest of their lives. The counter argument by Galanter (2006) suggests that it is debatable whether early initiation into alcohol will result in alcohol problems, or if it is an early sign of a potential problem. The potential problem of alcohol misuse may be complicated by factors such as genetic and family

characteristics. This means that families with a history of alcohol misuse usually pass it on to their offspring.

Researchers have different standards of defining “*risky drinking*.” Morejele, Kachieng’a, Mokoko, Nkoko, Parry, Nkowane, Moshia and Saxena (2006) suggest that when a male drinks more than five standard drinks per day during the weekend, this could be classified as harmful drinking. Females only need to drink at least three standard drinks per day for their behavior to be defined as risky. Stueve and O’Donnell (2005) warn that risky drinking increases the chance of exposure to HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs), such as syphilis. Early alcohol misuse among youths may affect their judgment, school performance and expose them to risk-taking environments such as taverns. Stueve and O’Donnell (2005) further caution that early alcohol misuse exposes urban youths to risky behaviors that may endanger their health and wellbeing. Male youths who start drinking early in life usually report alcohol problems, multiple sex partners, unprotected sex, and being drunk during sexual intercourse. It is important to target male youths with HIV prevention programs before they start misusing alcohol or initiating sex with their partners (Stueve & O’Donnell, 2005).

2.2 Alcohol misuse, multiple sexual partners and HIV risk

Research shows that as early as 1901, there was a link between alcohol misuse and the risk of contracting STIs such as syphilis (Cook & Clark, 2005). Karim and Karim (2010) define STIs as infections caused by bacteria, fungi, protozoa and viruses that are passed on through sexual intercourse. Cook and Clark (2005) further state that recent studies affirm that youths who misuse alcohol are more likely to report cases of STIs. Drinking patterns play a role in risk-taking behavior that leads to the spread of STIs. People who occasionally consume wine at dinner are less at risk than youths who are often intoxicated at parties, and subsequently engage in sex with multiple partners (Trichopoulou, 2001; Machimana, 2012).

Alcohol misuse puts youths at risk of contracting HIV, because of its effect on behavior or its adverse effect on the immune system (Cook & Clark, 2005). For example, Karim and Karim (2010) affirm that STIs may cause inflammation of the genitals and increase the susceptibility to HIV infection. Untreated STIs accelerate the rate of progression of HIV to AIDS in people living with HIV (Karim & Karim 2010). Young people aged 15 to 24 years who report having unusual genital discharge and genital ulcers are more at risk of HIV infection (Pettifor, Rees, Kleinschmidt, Steffenson, MacPhail, Hlongwa-Madikizela, Vermaak & Padian, 2005). The duration of the progression of HIV to AIDS is dependent on the effectiveness or strength of the immune system, among other things.

A study conducted by Simbayi, Mwaba, and Kalichman (2006) showed that 16.2% of people with multiple partners were significantly more likely to report alcohol consumption than the 8.3% of people with one partner, who did not consume alcohol. The study also found that people who frequently used alcohol were less likely to use condoms during sex. The findings of this study are supported by an international study, which indicates that people who drink heavily are more likely to engage in sexual intercourse with multiple partners (Rutledge, Siebert & Wilke 2008). Juma and Klot (2011) claim that young men view multiple partners as a “*strategic*” and “*recreational*” way of ensuring the availability of women to satisfy their sexual needs. Young men tend to have multiple partners in order to protect themselves against disappointment, as they will have a choice as to which women they can have sex with. Heavy drinkers have been found to have more sexual partners than non-users of alcohol, and this poses the risk of transmitting HIV.

Research has shown that the misuse of alcohol not only influences HIV risk behaviour, but can also have detrimental effects on individuals who are already living with HIV. Van Dyk (2001) asserts that the use of alcohol is linked to the suppression of the immune system, lowering

of the CD4 cell count, as well as increased chances of contracting other STIs. Heavy drinking among people living with HIV affects their immune system negatively, thereby accelerating the rate of progression to the AIDS stage, which is the final phase of the disease (Majozi, 2010).

2.3 Masculinity in the context of HIV risk

The concept of masculinity originated in the mid-1980s and has established a link in terms of research in men's studies (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Masculinities are created both at the social and psychological levels, and can be understood as patterns of practice that perpetuate the dominance of men over women. The practice of dominance by men over women is structurally supported, and in some African societies, women are subjected to violence daily (Ratele, 2008). In South Africa, economic and social inequality is seen as one of the factors that makes African women vulnerable to structural dominance by men (Albertyn, 2003; Machimana, 2012). Oppong, Oppong and Odotei (2006) point out that women were most severely impacted by the decline of the economy in Ghana. Linked to the concept of gender inequality in African societies, women find themselves to be most at risk for HIV infection. It is therefore critical to explore the role of the masculinity factor in HIV risk among male youths. Gender inequity that violates the sexual rights of women poses HIV risks for both males and females (Machimana, 2018). Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) indicate that masculinity is used to study men's health practices, such as risky sexual behaviour.

The belief that alcohol stimulates sexual desire contributes to its consumption before sexual intercourse. Nolen-Hoeksema (2008) reasons that alcohol may impair sexual judgment and expose the user to the risk of HIV infection. Forut (2010: 4) suggests that "*masculinity*" is linked to having multiple partners, drinking alcohol and engaging in promiscuous behaviour. Harrison, O'Sullivan, Hoffman, Dolzal and Morrell (2006) argue that men tend to have their first sexual intercourse at a younger age and have more sexual partners than women. This is a negative expression of masculinity, and is sometimes associated with sexual coercion, which makes women vulnerable to HIV infection. In addition, rape cases are reported in situations where men want to impose their masculinity on women (Ratele, 2008). For instance, a woman was gang-raped at a bus terminus in Swaziland because she wore a miniskirt. Ratele (2008) reports a similar incidence of gender-based sexual violence at a Johannesburg taxi rank, where men inserted their fingers into a woman's vagina because she wore a miniskirt.

It is essential to engage men in the process of combating gender-based violence against women. The Development of Community Knowledge and Direct Access (DOCKDA) is one of the organisations that have pioneered projects that engage men in addressing gender-based violence in the Northern Cape Province, in South Africa. DOCKDA (2011) aims at addressing the spread of HIV by including men in gender-based violence projects. Men are actively involved as facilitators in some of the workshops, in order to curb gender-based violence against women. The engagement of men will be of benefit to both genders in South Africa, where different forms of the negative expression of masculinity are displayed against women. Ratele (2008: 519) adds that more men are challenging "*masculinity*", and this a positive step towards addressing HIV risk.

3. Methodology

3.1 Qualitative research methodology

The use of the qualitative methodology was appropriate to this study, as the researchers were interested in obtaining an in-depth insight into and understanding of the perceptions of the association between alcohol misuse and the risk of HIV infection among male youths (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Glesne (2006) indicates that this design allows the researchers

to contextualise and interpret the complexity of the experiences, feelings and thoughts from the male youths' perspective, rather than from the researchers' perspective. Purposive sampling was used in this study. The sample comprises fourteen male youths ($n = 14$) between the ages of 16 and 20 years.

3.2 Data analysis: Inductive thematic analysis

The first step in thematic analysis involves reading and rereading the transcriptions in order to obtain an overall idea of the research participants' responses. The process involves identifying common patterns in the data, which were interpreted according to the Social Learning theory and Health Belief Model (Neuman, 1997). The emerging themes were grouped and named accordingly. From the emerging themes, meanings were formulated and clustered into sub-themes. Flick, Von Kardorff and Steinke (2004) state that this helps to classify the different patterns in data according to analytical themes. Braun and Clarke (2006) affirm that the last step involves integrating all emerging themes into an in-depth description of the male youths' perceptions.

3.3 Theoretical framework: Social learning theory

According to Albert Bandura (1986), behaviour is a result of the interaction between cognition, behaviour, environment and physiology (Airhihenbuwa & Obregon, 2000). Bandura's theory is relevant to this study, because alcohol affects both cognition and behaviour. Adolescents are vulnerable to impaired judgment under the influence of alcohol, with the risk of engaging in unprotected sex. Brannon and Feist (2004) argue that Social Learning theory explains alcohol consumption as a socially learned behaviour through modelling. Schultz and Schultz (2005) assert that Bandura developed the Social Learning theory for the purpose of modifying learned behaviours that are regarded as unwanted in society. In this study, risky sexual behaviour associated with alcohol misuse may be addressed through the Social Learning theory.

3.4 Ethical considerations

The researchers negotiated access to interview male youths who are supported and trained by the health and welfare organisation in Soshanguve. Nong (2011), the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the health and welfare organisation, who has the authority to control access, represented the management of the institution. Access to the research participants was granted, without imposing any demands on the research process. Babbie and Mouton (2001) indicate that it is important to provide details and explain the reason for conducting the research, so that the research participants can make an informed decision about their participation. Neuman (1997) agrees that ethical researchers should disclose the full details of the purpose of the research project. In this study, the researchers did not withhold or provide incorrect information, and the research participants agreed to participate based on the correct understanding of the requirements of the research project.

4. Results

4.1 Male youths' perceptions, knowledge and beliefs of alcohol misuse and HIV prevention

The findings of this research are discussed under this broad theme, namely the male youths' perceptions, knowledge and beliefs of alcohol misuse and HIV prevention. The theme is

supported by three sub-themes that emerged during the face-to-face interviews, as discussed below.

4.1.1 *Knowledge about the role of alcohol misuse on HIV prevention*

The researchers asked the research participants the following question: “How can alcohol misuse facilitate the risk of contracting HIV?” The following quotes reflect the sentiments of the participants regarding the role of alcohol misuse in hindering HIV prevention:

“At the same time, male youths go to their girlfriends’ homes and sleep with them. And in a drunk situation, whereby they do not even use condoms. When they do not use condoms there is more possibility of getting infected with HIV” (Participant 1).

Participant 2 supports the claim that lack of knowledge makes male youths vulnerable to HIV:

“HIV is an infection that affects our society. Mainly the youths because where we are in fact where we are you cannot say there is no knowledge. We do not care about the information that we have” (Participant 3).

The following response highlight the risk of meeting a sexual partner at a tavern, whose HIV status is not known:

“HIV infection, you see youths, us, we like alcohol and go to shebeens and drink alcohol. You meet someone like a girl in a shebeen, you talk to her. You buy her alcohol to drink and after she is drunk you take her. You tell her, let’s go to see my place and you go there. They have sex without using a condom and that is how he contracts AIDS.” (Participant 5).

4.1.2 *Alcohol misuse among male youths*

Most of the research participants believe that alcohol misuse can increase the risk of contracting HIV. Only one research participant made it clear that alcohol in itself does not pose an HIV risk, but rather the risky behavior of the male youths when they are intoxicated. The following is what the research participants had to say in response to the question: “How can alcohol misuse facilitate the risk of contracting HIV?”:

“When young people are abused at home, they think that the easiest way to solve their problems is to have sex or drink alcohol; after drinking alcohol and having sex.” (Participant 1).

“Alcohol can facilitate the risk of HIV and AIDS by drinking it a lot. Some males when they drink alcohol, they no longer know who they are. So we differ, so somebody who drinks too much always is no longer sober, can contract HIV because he does not know what he is doing after drinking alcohol.” (Participant 3).

Participant 4 explains how some male youths expose themselves to HIV when they are under the influence of alcohol:

“As I said you get a girl at the tavern, you take her and you forget to use a condom. And that girl has AIDS, you forgot to use a condom and you have sex.”

Participant 11 was the only one who mentioned that alcohol on its own cannot expose male youths to HIV infection. He understands the distinction between alcohol misuse and the risk of contracting HIV because of risky sexual behaviour:

“They can get HIV by having sex. But those who drink alcohol only cannot get HIV.”

4.1.3 *The use of condoms during sexual intercourse*

There were two participants who reported that failure to use condoms is attributed to females who complain that it is painful. Others fail to use condoms because they have sex under the influence of alcohol. Participant 1 was the only one who was sceptical about the use of condoms, because they may burst during sex, which poses the risk of contracting HIV. He recommends that people should be faithful to one partner, in order to prevent the spread of HIV. The following extracts highlight male youths' perceptions of condom use:

"We do not use condoms, and some girls do not want condoms. Some girls say a condom is painful. Some boys want condoms more than the girls." (Participant 5).

"People say they cannot eat a banana with its skin." (Participant 12).

Despite the reluctance of some male youths to use condoms, participant 6 indicates that *"It is good to use condoms because it protects against AIDS"*. Proper and consistent use of condoms is one of the means of preventing HIV, although there is evidence that male youths neglect to use them:

"It is a very good thing because we need condoms when it comes to some situations. Because now more people are infected with HIV and AIDS. More people will get it from having sex without protection." (Participant 14).

Some male youths coerce their sexual partners into having unprotected sex. Participant 14 made the following comment when responding to the question on the use of condoms:

"But others they just avoid to use a condom, because for example maybe a boy can tell a girl that we must have sex and that girl does not want to have sex. She will say, I am not ready to have sex with someone. That boy will say, if you do not have sex with me without a condom, it shows that you do not love me."

5. Discussion

5.1 *Male youths' perceptions, knowledge and beliefs of alcohol misuse and HIV prevention*

The discussion follows a similar structure to the findings above.

5.2 *Knowledge about the role of alcohol misuse on HIV prevention*

The research participants indicated that alcohol has a negative impact on HIV prevention. They highlighted that some male youths indulge in unprotected sex when they are intoxicated because of alcohol. Unprotected sex, which is sexual intercourse without using a condom, is a hindrance to HIV prevention. Having unprotected sex, which is connected to alcohol misuse, is one of the ways in which the spread of the HIV pandemic in South Africa is perpetuated. The following quotation illustrates this point:

"Because you drink alcohol, overdose, and then you get some girls outside. Then that girls go with you at home, sleep with you and you do not condomise, so you can get HIV." (Participant 7).

Participant's 7 comment is consistent with the findings of other studies that were reviewed. For example, Kalichman et al. (2007) state that unprotected sex with different partners is common among people who misuse alcohol. Alcohol misuse is reported to encourage male youths to have multiple sexual partners. The concept of multiple sexual partners could either refer to one male youth having more than one female sexual partner, or vice versa. An example of this is given in the following statement:

"Male youths drink and after drinking is where they start to have sex with her because of alcohol. She cannot see who is sleeping with her because she is drunk." (Participant 8).

Morejele et al. (2006) and Mangerud, Bjerk, Holmen, Lydersen and Indredavik (2014) indicate that alcohol misuse is associated with HIV infection, which has consistently been linked to the risky behaviour of having multiple sexual partners. In some cases, multiple sexual partners is related to power play, where male youths use their masculinity to dominate women. Jabu, a male student, reports how he trapped a female student into having sex against her will:

"I invited her into my room. Once she was in my room, I started to make my move. I touched her hand, and when she did not pull away, I started playing with her fingers. Next thing we were kissing and we had sex." (Juma & Klot, 2011).

In this study, the male youths know that the risk of HIV is associated with alcohol misuse. They are aware of safe sex, although the research findings still report cases of unprotected sex among male youths.

5.3 Alcohol misuse among male youths

Most of the research participants are aware of the dangers of the misuse of alcohol among male youths. The research participants warn that alcohol misuse may expose male youths to HIV and interfere with their academic development. Participant 1 was the only research participant who made a clear distinction between alcohol misuse and risky behaviour. His point highlights that alcohol itself does not transmit HIV, but rather the risky behaviour associated with the misuse of alcohol.

Participant 11 commented as follows:

"They can get HIV by having sex. But those who drink alcohol only cannot get HIV".

The following extract highlights the feelings of the male youth about alcohol misuse:

"As youths we should abstain from sex and alcohol, use condoms, more, especially when we talk about alcohol. Alcohol is not good for youths because you cannot control yourself after drinking." (Participant 10).

The research participants in the study are living in an urban township, namely Soshanguve. As such, people living in urban townships and informal settlements are more vulnerable to HIV in South Africa. Kalichman, Simbayi, Vermaak, Jooste, and Cain (2008) state that HIV in South Africa is exacerbated by substance misuse, with alcohol being the most misused substance. In this regard, Kalichman et al. (2006) report that alcohol is the most commonly misused substance and 39% of male youths aged between 10 and 21 years drink alcohol. The studies mentioned above support the findings of this current study in Soshanguve, Gauteng province.

Moreover, alcohol misuse and unsafe sexual behaviour are associated with specific populations and specific risk situations. Pettifor et al. (2005) assert that alcohol is associated with HIV risky behaviour in drug users. Some people who misuse alcohol are more prone to having a history of injecting themselves with drugs (Kalichman et al., 2006; Machimana, 2012; Mangerud et al., 2014).

Participant 5's comments support the literature:

"You see when male youths, use injections, after I have used the injection, I pass it on to someone through blood."

Contaminated blood exchange is a known means of HIV transmission.

5.4 The use of condoms during sexual intercourse

The majority of the research participants emphasised that male youths do not use condoms. Some of the excuses given for not using condoms are related to the youths' mythical analogies. For example, *"people say they cannot eat a banana with its skin. They are only fooling themselves"* (Participant 12). Few individuals have made their stand, where this is contrary to the myths about condom use.

Participant 11 said:

"I feel good about it, so that I should not be sick. So that I should not be infected with HIV".

Participant 11's opinion regarding condoms is in agreement with the literature on the value of condoms. The Health Belief Model indicates that the perceived severity of an illness encourages people to take proactive steps to prevent diseases (Feist, 2004).

According to Lancet (2007), condoms serve as a protection (80 to 90%) against HIV if they are used consistently and properly. The concern that was raised by some male youths about condoms bursting shows that they do not use them correctly. Lancet (2007) expounds on condom use and links its added value to male circumcision, meaning that male circumcision contributes significantly in HIV-prevention if it is complemented with proper and consistent condom use. The question that arises about male circumcision is whether it has or will have a negative impact on the use of condoms among male youths. This issue did not surface in this current study as it was not the main focus, but this is worth exploring in future research.

Some male youths find themselves in a dilemma, especially when a female rejects the use of a condom during sexual intercourse.

"Some girls say a condom is painful. Some say I do not want a condom, a condom damage me, you see" (Participant 5).

Karim and Karim (2010) report on young women of 15 to 24 years, who complain that male condoms make sex less pleasurable. The negative attitude towards condoms will discourage male youths from using condoms during sexual intercourse.

Participant 13 warns that some male youths' failure to use condoms is due to alcohol misuse:

"They do not use condoms. Because when they get drunk, they want to enjoy what they are doing. If you are drunk you cannot even think about a condom".

As reported in the research findings, male youths sometimes use alcohol to *"buy sex"*. Norris, Kitali, and Worby (2009) confirm that in some cases, sex is used in exchange for alcohol, food or gifts, and it is referred to as transactional sex. Transactional sex is commonly reported with reference to women, but transactional sex also occurs between young men over alcohol (Lane, Raymond, Dladla, Raseth, Struthers, McFarland, & McIntyre, 2009). In this study, only one research participant reported being involved in a same-sex relationship, but was not necessarily involved in transactional sex.

In summary, many adolescents do not use condoms, notwithstanding its value in HIV prevention. When male youths avoid using condoms, they increase the probability of contracting STIs, including HIV.

6. Conclusion

This paper reviewed a study conducted to investigate male youths' perceptions, knowledge and beliefs of alcohol misuse and HIV prevention. The data was collected by means of

face-to-face interviews with the participants. The study found that there is a lack of knowledge among male youth regarding the risk factors that lead to HIV infection, including the abuse of substances such as alcohol. Many of these youths do not associate this with HIV/AIDS, and if they do not have knowledge, it becomes difficult for them to look after themselves and others. It is remarkable that some of the views of the male youths coincide with the studies conducted by other researchers. The study found that male youths think of themselves as being invincible, as if they “*may not*” be infected with HIV. It is egocentrism that leads to personal myths, which cause some male youths to engage in risky sexual behaviour, such as having sex without using a condom. Male youths need more than HIV information to cope with social challenges, which are complicated by the dynamics of alcohol misuse and the HIV pandemic.

The information gathered during the face-to-face interviews could be used to improve the HIV prevention programme of the organisation. The main recommendations include the following: a policy should be developed and implemented; there should be formal, integrated school programmes on HIV, in order to enable young people with regard to HIV prevention. Moreover, gender dynamics and cultural issues should be addressed, as people have used them incorrectly to their sexual benefit, which has in turn resulted in the spread of HIV. In addition, raise ongoing awareness of alcohol abuse in communities, in order to reduce the rates of HIV transmission.

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Accreditation Process and Outcomes: Experience of the University of Tripoli Alahlia, Libya

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Abstract

Background and objectives: Quality assurance and institutional accreditation in education is becoming of paramount importance. This study aims to assess the impacts of the accreditation process of the National Center for Quality Assurance and Accreditation (NCAAA) on the quality of education in one of private university in Libya. **Methods:** The research adopts a descriptive study design in University of Tripoli Alahlia (UTA) where an official accreditation process was completed by the NCQAA during 2017-2019. Data were collected using the self-study report that produced by the NCQAA accreditation committee during the accreditation process, and were retrieved in specific data collection sheet by one of the authors. **Results:** The NCQAA accreditation process that lasted about 4 years brought significant changes in the educational progressions and made the staff members more aware of quality issues in education. Our findings also reported significant improvements in the quality of education in the university. **Conclusions:** The process of NCQAA accreditation conducted in UTA has been positively improved the quality of education. Data from other institutions would also expressively increase the relevance and rationality of the study.

Keywords: accreditation, educational institution, NCQAA, Libya.

1. Introduction

During the last two decades, a tremendous improvement in the field of higher education has been observed, whereby higher education has been moved from an elite organization to a mass contributing sector (Atia & Elfard, 2020). Progressively, many students are seeking higher education which is often linked with better careers and sophisticated employment chances. For various individuals, university education is the only means for socially and essentially enhancement of their life standards (Ibrahim, 2004).

Educational institutions, mainly private colleges and universities, play a crucial part in country developing by attaining universal competitive benefits. As such, they are likely to yield graduates who hold the essential knowledge and skills required in the international industries and markets (Kashisaz & Mobarak, 2018). The mission is too remarkable that educational institutions have to frequently and repetitively audit themselves against international standards and stay themselves up-to-date of innovative advances. Thus, there is an urgent necessity to further boost the quality of education (UNESCO, 2007).

The private educational institute is considered as a key partner for the governmental institute in driving the cycle of educational enhancement in most of the Arabic nations. Globally, the private colleges and universities have elaborated in an extensive investment by the higher education sector (Hiyam, 2016). The growth of the higher education in Libya was chiefly controlled by the government, but there was an overt involvement of the private part which denoted in the launching of universities and colleges that honor degrees of higher education in different specialties (Tamtam, 2011). The quality of education offered by most of these private institutions might have played a distinguish role in enhancing and improving the higher education output in the manner of specialties and skills of the graduates (Atia & Elfard, 2020).

Not until 2006, the higher education institutes in Libya, including private colleges and universities, required no national accreditation. However, due to the rapid progression of education that demanded the construction of a governmental agency with the mission of auditing the quality assurance of higher education. Consequently, the ministry of higher education approved the establishment of National Center for Quality Assurance and Accreditation (NCQAA). Thus, it is now obligatory for all higher education institutes to get accredited by the NCQAA (NCQAA, 2020).

The NCQAA is a self-regulating center with concern under the law by the resolution number 18, 2010 for quality accreditation and assurance in all field of education, at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The NCQAA has adapted an inclusive quality assurance and accreditation system issued in the year of 2016 that has derived from international experience with the respect of local characteristics (NCQAA, 2020). Its mission includes implementing standards, measures and procedures for accreditation, revising and assessing performance of current and new institutions, accrediting educational institutions, and supporting quality assurance.

Accreditation in Libyan education sector is the process of evaluating an educational institution and officially recognizes it as having met, or failed the NCQAA criteria. There are two basic types of educational institution accreditation; institutional (nine criteria) and academic program (eight criteria). It involves a site visit for at least three days in each accreditation type by the accreditation committee which apply a critical auditing, with the decision of awarding accreditation to those institutions that meet their criteria.

The study, therefore, aimed to examine the impact of NCQAA accreditation on the quality of education of the University of Tripoli Alahlia (UTA), a private university that has awarded the national accreditation (institutional and academic) by NCQAA accreditation process conducted during 2017-2019.

2. Methods

The study is a descriptive research design conducted in University of Tripoli Alahlia (UTA) where an official accreditation process was completed by the NCQAA during 2017-2019. Ethical approval was obtained from the UTA's research ethics committee. All data obtained were kept strictly confidential and hasn't been exposed to anybody at any stage of the study.

A standardized instrument has been used based on data collected from the self-study report that produced by the NCQAA accreditation committee during the accreditation process, and were retrieved in specific data collection sheet by one of the authors. The collected data involved; mission & vision, program specification, courses specification, course evaluation survey, student experience survey, program evaluation by graduates, graduate evaluation by stakeholders, course report, annual program report, program evaluation, student representation in committees, academic supervision, declaration of office hours, introduction of learning resources center, structured department development activities, independent evaluation, comparison of student's achievement in different courses, and follow up of student progression.

The collected information was entered into excel spreadsheets and analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, Version 22.0. Armonk, NY: IBM Corp. Chi-square test was used to compare the collected data. *P*-value less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant. A brief summary of all the results was arranged and discussed with the quality control committee of the studied university before drawing our discussion and conclusions for this study. Chi square will be used for testing the significance of data.

3. Results and discussion

This study investigated the impact of NCQAA accreditation on the quality of education of the University of Tripoli Alahlia. The obtained results clearly revealed improvement in the quality of education throughout and after NCQAA accreditation compared to the situation before accreditation process. It is obvious that these processes made the staff members more aware of quality issues in education. Although it is hard to provide information on all aspect of the implication of NCQAA accreditation, we have assessed some important points of the impacts before, throughout and after the accreditation exercise in all accredited university departments.

To test the impact of the NCQAA accreditation process on the quality of education at UTA, the following figure and table are used. During the accreditation, programs are assessed and reported regularly with statistics providing the level to which learning outcomes were being attained. Data presented in figure 1 shows improvement in quality of education through and after NCQAA accreditation. Our study reported that the university became more receptive to the annual program report and program evaluation by graduates to identify if any curriculum modifications required to accommodate changes in national and international requirements in education. Course specifications became mandatory before the start of all courses. Moreover, course evaluation survey and course reports became essential parts for application of all basic and specialized courses. Data also found that the university became more receptive to program specification, graduate evaluation by stakeholders, independent evaluation, and academic supervision. In line with our findings, previous study has also reported improvement in several aspects after the accreditation process which could enhance the quality of education (Al Mohaimeed et al., 2012). Similar findings were reported in a study done in Nigeria (Alani, 2008).

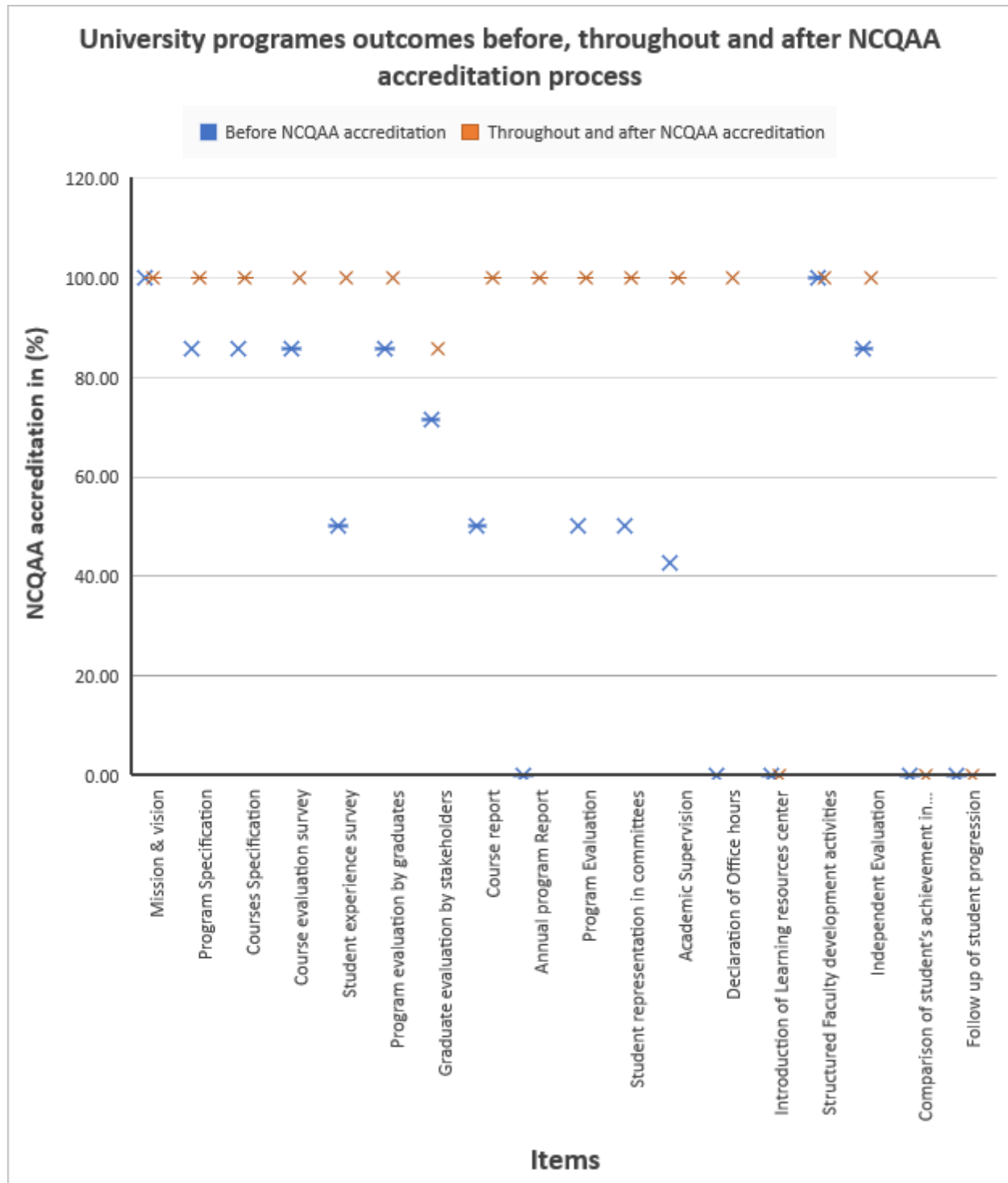


Figure 1. University programs outcomes before, throughout and after NCQAA accreditation process.

It was believed that accreditation process had a major role in stimulating student representation in committees. Moreover, the role of accreditation in improving the quality of education at the university had a very positive impact in declaration of office hours that allow students to find their instructors for consultation and advice, and consequently could positively

impact the learning process. Student experience survey has also been improved during and after NCQAA accreditation process, representing their awareness and concerns with program evaluation. Similarly, earlier study conducted in Australia and New Zealand reported major changes to their courses in the last 10 years due to accreditation obligations. They concluded that teaching and evaluation of communication skills, student-based learning, the application of information technology in courses, and course evaluation was more consistent (Simpson, 2005). On the contrary, our results revealed insufficiency in follow up of student progression, introduction of learning resources center, and comparison of student's achievement in different courses.

Quality indicators are identified and used for all programs are presented in table 1. Programs are regularly evaluated and reported with information providing the scope to which learning results were being achieved. The records of programs evaluation show statistically significant improvement in the quality of learning from 58.3% to 83.3% ($P < 0.05$). Noticeably, departments of pharmacy and medical laboratories shows the highest improvement from 38.9% to 80.6 and 36.1 to 80.6 before and after the accreditation process, respectively ($P < 0.05$).

Table1. Changes in the programs' quality of education as an impact of NCAAA accreditation process

Program	Before NCQAA accreditation	Throughout and after NCQAA accreditation	P value
	N (%)	N (%)	
Management	58.33	83.33	0.008
Accounting	58.33	83.33	0.008
Law	58.33	83.33	0.008
English	58.33	83.33	0.008
Architecture	58.33	83.33	0.008
Pharm.	38.89	80.56	0.000
Med Lab.	36.11	80.56	0.000

Despite the applicability of the NCQAA criteria to educational institutions is controversial, our study suggests that, the impact of the accreditation processes including concentrated data collection, documentation, and analysis was clearly felt at all levels.

The role of accreditation in quality assurance and education enhancement is well documented. However, there are variances in views regarding the mechanisms by which an accreditation process impacts the quality assurance processes. Several scientists have stated that accreditation is valuable not only to assess the educational excellence of new and established institutions, but also to permit specific institutions to monitor and afford a resource that help in constant improvement of the curriculum (Simpson, 2005; Azila, & Tan, 2005).

Owing that the accreditation and recognition is a variable procedure, the criteria and procedures of this accreditation should be repeatedly revised. This review process can be revised through feedback from observational studies, expert commentaries, institutions experiencing accreditation or recognition. Governmental strategies related to education, stakeholder consultation, and communication with other educational institutions may also be valuable. Further, regular evaluation practice against national and international accreditation criteria is worth (Bac, 2015).

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, our findings revealed that the process of NCQAA accreditation conducted in UTA has been positively improved the quality of education. The indicators of follow up of student progression, introduction of learning resources center, and comparison of student's achievement in different courses may give relative low implication of quality assurance in this institution, suggesting the need of more work to improve these indicators. Moreover, detailed research is advisable to test the implication of accreditation on the learning quality and improvement. Data from additional institutes would also significantly increase the relevance and rationality of the study. Nonetheless, the conclusions drawn from this study are worthy.

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Policing of Goods Piracy in a Developing Country: A Case of South Africa

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Abstract

South Africa forms part of the global village and is not exempted from goods piracy. These substandard goods pose physical and health risks to consumers and business. This study explored the policing of goods piracy in South Africa and the abilities of law enforcement agencies to police this crime. A qualitative research design was adopted. A literature review and interviews were conducted to provide an overview of this problem. The involvement of organized criminals exacerbates the problem and indications are that corruption is rampant in law enforcement agencies. Law enforcement agencies working in silos result in the rapid spreading of goods piracy. A shortage of skilled police members and a lack of training are identified as major problems. The findings of this study can serve as guidelines for preventative and reactive response mechanisms and can suggest ways of improving efficiency and effectiveness in policing goods piracy.

Keywords: policing of goods piracy, South Africa, corruption, copyright infringement, work, money laundering.

1. Introduction

South Africa is a dumping ground for pirated goods. It will cost the country a great deal of money to dispose of them safely (South African Institute of Intellectual Property Law, 2015). The streets and shops in the country's biggest cities are inundated with traders who, on a daily basis, sell pirated goods to knowing and unsuspecting consumers despite the fact that trading in pirated goods is a copyright infringement and an Intellectual Property crime. Goods piracy is a crime that needs to be policed in South Africa. It is the duty of law enforcement officials in every country to enforce the law and prevent crime. In South Africa, the South African Police Services (SAPS) is responsible for policing crime that occurs within the borders of the country.

A major problem in the policing of goods piracy is the fact that the manufacturers of pirated goods are located in several countries across the world. The manufacturers and dealers form part of organised criminal groupings and, to make matters worse, they make use of unregulated and hazardous materials in producing pirated goods. Pirated goods are copied from original goods without the permission of the original goods owner and resemble the genuine goods (Beauchamp, 1998: 278). The Copyright Act, 98 of 1978, criminalises trading in pirated goods. In terms of Section 2 of the Copyright Act, the following categories of works, if they are original, are eligible for copyright protection: literary and artistic works, cinematography, signals, published editions and computer programs.

Unlike the original goods, pirated goods have not been tested by authoritative institutions to determine if the materials used in producing them are not harmful to people. With the advent of advanced technological machinery and tools, the manufacturers of pirated goods have perfected their skills to such an extent that it becomes difficult, if not impossible, for an ordinary consumer to distinguish between genuine and pirated goods without carrying out tests (Bain & Veloutsou, 2007: 212). As a result, criminals continue to sell pirated goods in streets and shops to consumers in many countries, including South Africa.

Intellectual property crime is a consumer fraud that hampers innovation and creativity in all nations (Spilsbury, 2009: 4). Section 41 (4) of the South African Copyright Act stipulates that no copyright shall subsist otherwise than by virtue of the Copyright Act. Goods that are protected by intellectual property rights enjoy a monopoly conferred by the state to prevent unauthorised production and exploitation by unscrupulous people (Staake & Fleisch, 2008: 33).

Consumer fraud is the hijacking of another person's product of the mind, the criminal production of goods that resemble that of the lawful owner, and the selling of the goods purported to be what they are not, with the ultimate goal of making an exorbitant profit (Treadwell, 2011: 176). Criminals who pirate goods that are owned by other people earn an unlawful income because they had not spent money on conducting research, developing the goods and procuring quality materials. A study conducted by BASCAP (2009: i) on the dangers and extent of pirated goods revealed the grievous losses that goods piracy causes governments and the lawful owners of genuine goods.

Despite a considerable body of literature on the dangers that goods piracy poses to people and the environment both nationally and internationally, no research study was conducted on the policing of goods piracy in South Africa.

It is against this background that the article will highlight the extent of goods piracy in South Africa and the issues which complicate the policing of goods piracy. Furthermore, this study will suggest guidelines for the policing of goods piracy.

2. Policing function

The policing function involves the prevention and detection of crime and the maintenance of law and order in society. This task is carried out by law enforcement officials such as the police (Newburn, 2008: 17). The police are expected to deter or prevent the occurrence of specific crimes, first, by altering the environment in which they occur; secondly, by changing the conditions which are thought to cause them; and, thirdly, by providing a strong deterrent in the form of an effective criminal justice system (White Paper on Safety and Security, 1999: 14). Policing involves crime prevention and any actions designed to reduce the level of crime and/or the perceived level of fear of crime with the intention of serving justice. In this context, the policing function is operationalised as the prevention and/or investigation of goods piracy.

The police is granted powers by the state to enforce the law. Section 205(3) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 108 of 1996, holds the SAPS responsible for protecting people and property, and maintaining law and order (South Africa, 1996a). The police also have a legislative mandate to serve society in terms of Section 13 of the South African Police Service Act, 68 of 1995.

2.1 *Specialized Commercial Crime Unit*

The Specialised Commercial Crime Unit is a division of the SAPS that is responsible for investigating commercial crimes. The Unit has branches in strategic provinces in South Africa

and investigates commercial crimes above R100 000. The Unit has dedicated members who are trained to police goods piracy in the country. Unfortunately, many capable members left the Specialised Commercial Crime Unit and joined private organisations and the corporate sector. The loss of manpower and financial crime investigation skills resulted in a skills and staff shortage. This has corroborated the assertion of some crime researchers that the SAPS is struggling to fight commercial crime (Corruption Watch, 2012). The skills and manpower shortage experienced by the Specialised Crime Unit has allowed crime to spiral out of control. Sensitive cases that are not speedily resolved could send a wrong signal to potential criminals of the police's inability to police commercial crimes such as goods piracy (Burger, 2014: 1). Poorly trained members could also burden the SAPS with litigation problems because they inevitably violate peoples' rights in the discharge of their duties. For instance, in the 2014/2015 financial year the pending civil claims against the SAPS stood at over R26 billion owing to the violation of peoples' constitutional rights (Deveymaeker, 2015: 29). Litigation is often caused by a lack of police professionalism and poor compliance with the laws and relevant policies of the SAPS.

3. Goods piracy

Goods piracy infringes property rights. In South Africa the 1996 Constitution protects property rights. Section 25 of the Constitution makes it a criminal offence to violate individual property rights. Copyrights are unregistered rights that allow copyright owners to prevent the unauthorised reproduction of their goods. The fact that the owners of genuine goods do not have to register as legitimate owners does not justify the reproduction of their products without their permission. Their ownership is automatically protected by the state. Piracy is an enormous problem globally. Business Software Alliance claims that 98% of the software used in China, including that used by the Chinese government, are illegal copies (Beauchamp, 1998: 278). China is regarded as the capital of copyright crimes. The cost-benefit analysis gives a better explanation of the economic benefits of goods piracy (Pires, Schneider & Herrera, 2016: 5). Criminals engage in criminal activities that are intended to reward them financially and this principle seems to hold in goods piracy. SAFACT (2009: 2) alleges that criminals use airports to bring pirated goods to South Africa.

3.1 *The extent and magnitude of goods piracy globally*

Goods piracy figures stand at around 6% to 10% of all trade globally and indicates that the industry is projected to be making more than \$600 billion annually (Lewis, 2009: 47). The above figure was for 2008 and the numbers have since increased with global trade uptake. In 2009 the United Nations (UN) reported that goods piracy constituted 7% of the world trade, an equivalent of 600 billion US dollars a year globally. This report further indicated that industries such as the computer software industry, and online streaming are lucrative markets for criminal syndicates that also produce drugs and illegal substances (Basu & Lee, 2015: 39).

The OECD (1998: 30) indicates that 67% of the world's pirated goods originate from China. It causes South African businesses an annual loss of over R2 billion in imported goods. These include a loss in sales, goodwill and royalties, among others (South African Institute of Intellectual Property Law, 2013: 16). The majority of criminals run the goods piracy business supply chain in a way similar to that of a legitimate business with undesirable consequences. The fact that some of the legitimate business owners mingle their genuine products with pirated goods, is unfair to legitimate producers and owners of goods (Joyce, 2011: 76).

The 2008 data of the value of illicit trade shows that the total global economic value of pirated products was 650 billion US dollars annually. South Africa, as a developing nation, is also included in the figures. According to ICC (2010), the impact of pirated goods would exceed 1.77

trillion US dollars with a possibility of more than 2.5 million people being placed out of work and not being able to earn a livelihood. No country in the world is unaffected by the problem; only the degree in which they experience it varies.

4. International property crime

Intellectual property crime is a crime of the mind. It could be divided into industrial property such as patents, trademarks, industrial designs, geographical indications and copyright that covers literary, films, music, artistic, architectural designs as well as recordings (WIPO, 2014: 2). Sonmez (2014: 758) asserts that goods piracy is an attractive business for free riders. Kerns (2016: 573) equates it with the capturing of another person's ideas by developing and imitating products without incurring a significant investment, thereby eroding the competitive edge of the original product owner.

4.1 *Organised crime*

Organised crime thrives when money is involved. Goods piracy is the most common commercial crime that terrorists engage in to finance their activities (Beare, 2012: 77). In South Africa, international criminals have been operational even before the democratic dispensation. They pose a serious security threat to the country (Govender, 2012: 1). Members of organised crime are a specialised subset of a criminal enterprise who maintain their position through the use of violence and blackmail. Businesses that are run by organised criminals are well resourced and sustainable (Spink, Meyer, Park & Heinonem, 2013: 60). The danger of organised criminals operating businesses is that they mingle the goods with pirated goods and have small armies that are responsible for squashing opposition. Legitimate businesses that are profitable are extorted and owners are threatened to pay bribes as a protection fee. Criminal bosses use sophisticated means, have significant financial resources, and are domiciled across the globe (Spink et al., 2013: 60). Many of them own properties in various countries.

Organised criminals are able to rope in countries' government officials to overcome administrative hurdles, access privileged government information, and are tipped off by the authorities if they were reported for the violation of laws (Balsamo, 2006: 373-377). This behaviour by government officials is tantamount to sharing confidential and protected information with criminals (Payne, 2013: 66). This conduct is unethical as privileged information is given out to the public in exchange of payment (Adejumo, 2010: 2). In terms of Section 1 of the Prevention of Organised Crime Act, 121 of 1998, police officials who have legitimate access to and control of sensitive information yield to corruption if they exchange it with criminals. As a consequence, governments are often unable to fight organised crime.

4.2 *Money laundering*

According to Le Khac, Markos, O'Neill, Brabazon, and Kechadi (2011: 504), money laundering is the third largest business in the world. Its turnover is estimated at between 500 billion and 1 trillion US dollars annually. Money from criminal activities is laundered to disguise its origin and elevate it to a legitimate status. Money laundering makes crime a worthwhile endeavour for criminals (Mackrell, 1996:47, South Africa, 1996b: 13). According to Choo and Smith (2008: 45) and Financial Action Task Team Guidance (2013a: 28), these criminals:

- use agents and mules to open bank accounts for them where transaction will be made to launder the money, and/or

- use their intermediaries, family and close associates to launder the dirty money on their behalf and they pay them a service fee or bribe.

Goods piracy is a consumer fraud and is, according to the police in South Africa, perpetrated by mostly organised criminal gangs with links with the Chinese Triad from Hong Kong and Taiwan such as the 14K and the Wo Shing Wo (Gastrow, 1999: 62). The above assertion confirms the prevalence of organised crime that dates back before the democratic dispensation in South Africa. Organised criminals are aware that they are wanted by the police and attempt to evade justice through devious means such as hiding the proceeds of crime and source of money when transacting.

South Africa is a member of the FATF, an organisation which sets international standards to combat money laundering and terrorism around the world (Tuba, 2012: 103). All member countries are required to conclude international agreements to combat transnational crimes such as terrorism and organised crime.

4.3 International legislative framework regulating goods piracy

Articles 6 and 7 of the United Nation's Convention Against Transnational Organised Crimes, also referred to as the Palermo Convention, make money laundering a criminal offence deserving of sanction. Another convention that makes money laundering punishable is the United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which was adopted in 1998. This Convention criminalises illicit trafficking, which could also be interpreted as the trafficking of money and drugs, and encourages governments to confiscate blood money and the proceeds of crime.

5. Context of study

The study was conducted in South Africa, which is a developing country characterised by high levels of crime. Developing and underdeveloped countries are a target for the dumping of goods and for goods piracy.

6. Methodology

6.1 Study population and procedure

A qualitative approach and empirical design were followed in this study. Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014: 11) describe it as a study that covers an array of interpretive techniques and seeks to describe, decode and translate information to get the meaning of a naturally occurring phenomenon in the social world. The design was appropriate for this study as there was little information in literature that could achieve the objective of this study, namely proper policing of goods piracy which involves preventative and reactive mechanisms.

The researcher used this design to obtain credible data from respondents and the observation of raids. A video recorder was used in seven raids that were conducted in various places to record the conduct of police and suspects during searches and the seizure of pirated goods. A recording was made of the people who were unaware that they were observed. Data was also gathered through individual face-to-face semi-structured interviews. The information was based on the police's involvement in activities to curb, reduce or eradicate goods piracy. The researcher asked operational people how goods piracy was policed, who assisted in the policing of goods piracy and what the extent of goods piracy was. The questions were directed at SAPS members, prosecutors from the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA), Department of Trade and

Industry (DTI) officials, owners and/or authors of goods or products, and attorneys. The members of the SAPS comprised of ten Specialised Commercial Crime Unit investigators and 66 members who conducted crime prevention duties. The other groups are seven prosecutors, five brand holders, four DTI officials and five Attorneys. A sample of 97 participants were selected in order to explore the policing of goods piracy in South Africa by various stakeholders responsible for combatting goods piracy. The researcher conducted fieldwork during an eight-month period extending from March 2018 to October 2018. The study commenced after the SAPS, NPA and DTI had granted permission to conduct research. Various provinces (Gauteng, Mpumalanga, the Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal) were visited and interviews were conducted with the participants.

The sample was purposively selected because the researcher knew people who had the information and knowledge to assist in the research. A voice recorder and filed field notes were used to supplement information gathering.

6.2 Data analysis

The collected data from interviews and the observation data were transcribed to facilitate the process. It was analysed methodically according to the thematic method by classification into themes, sub-themes and categories. To this effect, Tesch's eight-step data analysis method, as discussed in Creswell (2014: 198), was used. It involved getting a sense of the whole; picking one of the transcribed interviews and reading it carefully; making a list of topics and clustering them; coding and classifying information; making a final decision and alphabetising the codes; assembling same categories; doing a preliminary analysis; and, finally, recording the data.

6.3 Ethical considerations

An ethical clearance was obtained from the College of Law at the University of South Africa before the commencement of this study (Ethical clearance reference number P29 issued on 23/09/2015). In this study, the researcher ensured confidentiality by not disclosing the personal details of the participants. The researcher obtained informed consent from all 97 participants in this study. The participants consented to be interviewed and were not coerced to partake in the study; hence participation was voluntary. All participants were informed that they were permitted to withdraw from the interviews. Participants were not allowed to discuss their individual responses among themselves. The information they provided was kept in a safe place. Participants were not remunerated for participating in the interviews. Video recordings of the raids were made with the consent of the SAPS management.

7. Findings and discussion

This section of the study laid emphasis on the analysis, presentation and interpretation of data that were collated in the course of this study. The interviews and observations results produced the themes and sub-themes. Statements by participants were confirmed by the observations. Four main questions and several sub-questions were posed in semi-structured interviews with 76 participants. The participants included SAPS members, prosecutors of the NPA, officials of the DTI, owners and/or authors of goods or products, and attorneys. The members of the SAPS included ten Specialised Commercial Crime Unit investigators and 66 members responsible for crime prevention. The other groups were seven prosecutors, five brand holders, four officials of the DTI, and five attorneys. A total of 97 people took part in this study. The responses of 97 interviews that were obtained by asking participants about their own

understanding of how goods piracy is policed in South Africa. This resulted in the following themes and sub-themes.

7.1 The nature and extent of goods piracy in the world and in South Africa

The findings indicate that goods piracy is a growing industry in the world and there are no signs that this phenomenon will subside in the near future. The statistics indicate that 60% of the total number of articles seized in the world in 2018 originated from China (Chaudhry & Zimmerman, 2013: 12) and that some legitimate businesses in South Africa are also guilty of goods piracy. Some legitimate-goods owners stated that the fight against goods piracy is undermined by the lack of a collaborative effort among production houses since legitimate producers operate in secrecy in an attempt to protect their products against copying. This is exacerbated by the fact that the use of protective items on goods means higher costs for producers.

A member of the Specialised Commercial Crime Unit confirmed this by stating that: *“China is destroying innovation in the world and legitimate producers of goods operate on a limited budget to invest in protecting their genuine goods so that it does not push up prices for genuine goods too high.”*

Most respondents stated that piracy goods are often produced in large quantities and sold at a lower price than that of genuine goods. This explains why consumers are eager to buy them. Piracy goods have a huge target market, namely the youth. Young people buy them at train stations, taxi ranks, bus terminals, shopping complexes, and flea markets across South Africa. Most of the sellers are foreign nationals and many of them are undocumented immigrants. Some of the more sophisticated sellers advertise and sell their goods online.

Almost all members of the Specialised Commercial Crime Unit, crime prevention units and the DTI mentioned that porous borders make it easy to bring pirated goods in the country. Bribery of corrupt law enforcement officials is another factor that enables goods piracy to thrive. Pirated goods that are taken from one country to another complicates the effective and efficient policing of this crime. Illicit goods are transported by air and sea. Goods piracy is a relatively easy enterprise and the considerable returns that it generates makes this crime attractive for terrorists and organised criminals who facilitate money laundering.

Criminals import plain goods, labels and machines to the country in separate consignments. Here they assemble the machines and reproduce goods that mimic the original. These are sold not only in South Africa but also in neighbouring countries. In contrast with police in countries such as the USA and Britain, the South African police do not make use of intelligence in their policing of goods piracy, and sporadic raids are seldom launched on sellers and dealers.

7.2 Policing of goods piracy

Members of the Specialised Commercial Crime Units, Crime Prevention Units and the DTI indicated that traders of goods piracy do not fear the police since some police members take bribes and abdicate their responsibility to confiscate pirated goods and or arrest the traders. However, in areas where the relationship between the police and community is good, the police receive information about criminal activities from community members. Here the fight against this crime tends to be more successful.

A member of the Specialised Commercial Crime Unit substantiated this by stating that: *“Many police members accept bribes from traders and this causes the police to lose respect from both the community and traders. As a consequence, community members hesitate to report crime and traders do not show respect for the police as they have them in their purse”.*

Many countries do not regard this crime as a top priority that needs concerted policing. Most of them, including South Africa, do not punish the buying of pirated goods for private use. This means that only the sellers are prosecuted. In many African countries it is common that criminals in possession of a few pirated goods for household use are not prosecuted.

A member of the Specialised Commercial Crime Unit vindicated this by stating that *“It is not a crime to carry few pirated goods for household use as long as one is not selling to the public, and this makes policing difficult as people would use household use as a defence when they are arrested”*.

Organised criminals are active in the goods piracy business as they consider it less risky. People who are arrested for this crime tend to be represented by reputable legal representatives and, if they are convicted, most of them prefer paying a fine to serving a jail term. A Crime Prevention Unit member corroborated this by stating that *“Even the presiding officers do not impose sentences that are proportional to crimes committed”*.

Countries such as Finland, New Zealand, Sweden, Norway, Italy, France, and the USA, have stronger laws against goods piracy and impose harsher sentences on dealers and sellers (Levy-Carciente, 2016: 16). It is difficult to identify and arrest the leaders of organised crime as they live all over the world, and produce sufficient evidence to arrest and convict them. The challenge of finalising extradition arrangements between countries is also an impeding factor because not all countries are willing to enter into such agreements. Moreover, the leaders or organised crime syndicates use other people to sell their consignments in various countries.

In South Africa, the owners who lease stalls and business premises to traders who sell these goods are seldom arrested and charged for partaking in criminal activities. Most of the selling areas are unmarked stalls and spaces. Because a fixed physical address is a precondition for the granting of warrants of search and seizure, it is difficult for the police to act. Market stalls that are not properly marked could lead to a search and seizure operation at the wrong stall, which could expose the police to litigation.

During an interview, one respondent stated: *“Property owners rent out properties, structures and spaces to criminals who trade in illicit goods and are never arrested for partaking and promoting criminality which is bad.”*

The other complication in South Africa is that most pirated goods sellers are economic migrants who sell illegal goods on the streets to make a living. What compounds this problem is the fact that many street vendors do not pay for a rental space and that many economic migrants use piracy goods as an opportunity to earn an income. They target places such as taxi and bus ranks, shopping complexes, open streets, streets opposite shops, trains and train stations, cinemas, major events and other entertainment sites.

South Africa lacks a coordinated system to keep statistics of goods piracy across the three major government departments that are involved in policing goods piracy, which are the DTI, Customs and Excise and the police. Uncoordinated ICT among these Departments impedes progress in the war against pirated goods. Against that, some dealers use sophisticated technology to communicate and transact with their fellow perpetrators. Proper use of integrated technology by these government departments is essential for the effective and efficient policing of this crime by law enforcement agencies.

7.3 Factors that hamper effective policing of goods piracy in South Africa

Various factors impede the effective and efficient policing of goods piracy in South Africa. This indicates the complex nature of dealing with this challenge which requires a multi-pronged and integrated strategy.

7.4 Prosecution of goods piracy

Few prosecutors at the Specialised Commercial Crime Courts in the nine provinces are trained to prosecute piracy goods criminals. Prosecutors working in courts other than Specialised Commercial Crime Courts such as magisterial and high courts, are neither trained. Therefore, they do not have the specialised skills required for prosecuting piracy goods criminals.

One prosecutor affirmed: *“Goods piracy should not be treated as a specialised matter; every prosecutor should be trained to prosecute these cases in any court.”*

7.5 Corruption within the police and other law enforcement agencies

Corruption in the ports of entry fuels criminality. Customs and excise officials and the police allow illicit substances and pirated goods into the country (Meltzer, 2010: 46). Pirated goods that have already entered the country are sold on the streets, in flea markets and at transport terminals. Police members do not confiscate them, but allow criminals sell them to the public in return for a bribe. Dedicated police members receive threats from organised criminals who are hand in glove with corrupt police members. As a result, the lives of honest police members and their families are in constant danger.

One of the police members confirmed this by revealing that: *“Many police members are organised criminals themselves. Some law enforcement members are very corrupt and many communities do not trust the police.”*

Some groups of organised criminals have links with the SAPS top management, who tip them off about impending raids (or searches and seizures). Members of the Specialised Commercial Crime Unit stated that, sometimes, police members at ports of entry are instructed by senior officers of the police and Customs and Excise not to search specific individuals' goods and consignments. Some organised crime leaders pay senior officers bribes in exchange for protection.

Almost all members of the Specialised Commercial Crime Unit claimed that law enforcement agencies are infiltrated by national and international criminals.

7.6 Characteristics of goods piracy

Since some pirated goods resemble the genuine product, it is difficult, if not impossible, to identify them at a glance. Dealers of pirated goods re-invest most of their profits in goods manufacturing equipment. This high-tech equipment makes spotting pirated goods almost impossible. Because confiscated products need to be tested, many legitimate producers based in other countries send their testers (equipment) to South Africa to conduct tests.

One Crime Prevention Unit member corroborated this by stating that: *“The naked eye cannot see what are piracy goods and what are not. It is difficult to distinguish pirated goods from originals without proper training.”*

Some legitimate goods owners outsource the production of their goods to external producers who, in most cases, produce it in excessive numbers to earn a higher income. This is unethical as the producers are not the owners of the goods.

7.7 Testing of pirated goods

To have a justiciable case, the court needs scientific reports confirming that goods are piracy goods. Owing to the shortage of experts in the country, goods have to be sent to foreign

countries for testing so that cases can be brought before the courts. Every producer of goods has its own testers. Unfortunately, they are not constantly in the country.

The testing of goods is conducted by the legitimate goods owner's representatives at the legitimate goods owner's expense. Because testing is not conducted by a neutral institution, the results could be biased. During an interview, one respondent stated: *"The Copyright Act grants the legitimate owner of goods the position of both player and referee of the game. This seems suspect. The complainants are the ones who test the alleged pirated goods and issue reports that confirm or dispute goods piracy"*.

7.8 Police powers

There is no sign of the proactive policing of goods piracy. The police mostly wait for complaints from owners who report goods piracy. Legitimate owners of goods employ legal representatives who test and evaluate the purchased alleged pirated goods. Proof of offending goods such as purchase receipts, copies or images are needed before a case can be reported to the police. One Specialised Commercial Crime Unit member declared: *"The owners of goods hire attorneys who have no knowledge of investigation work to do test purchases at suspicious shops and stalls, instead of forensic investigators who are experienced in investigation work."*

7.9 Shortage of manpower in the Specialized Commercial Crime Unit

There is shortage of workers with critical skills in the Specialised Commercial Crime Unit owing to natural attrition and members leaving this unit in droves for appointments in the private sector. This affects the capacity of the Unit to deal with goods piracy crime. This was confirmed by the then Acting Head of the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation, Major-General Yolisa Matakata, when she briefed the Portfolio Committee on Police on 16 February 2018.

One Specialised Commercial Crime Unit member said: *"Skilled commercial crime police members are absorbed by corporates. They leave the SAPS for better perks and working conditions."*

An analysis of the staff complement of this Unit as part of research conducted from 2014 to 2018 confirms this. The head of the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigations, General Godfrey Lebeya, also regarded the shortage of skills and lack of competence of members as an impediment to winning the commercial crime war.

One respondent from the Specialised Commercial Crime Unit was asked about measures that were put in place to tackle manpower shortage and lack of critical skills in the Unit. The respondent declared that *"The Specialised Commercial Crime Unit is a skeleton without any flesh, because if someone leaves the service, there is no replacement"*.

7.10 The strategy used to police goods piracy

Neither the SAPS nor the DTI has a strategy for dealing with goods piracy criminals. Even the Specialised Commercial Crime Unit does not have strategy to police goods piracy. The SAPS, the DTI and the Specialised Commercial Crime Unit follow a generic strategy referred to as the National Crime Prevention Strategy to fight crime including goods piracy. There is not even an in-house policy on how goods piracy crime should be policed.

Almost all groups of members alluded to the lack of a goods piracy strategy across all law enforcement agencies.

8. Conclusion

The article explored the policing of goods piracy. It presented the empirical and literature findings for enhancing the policing of goods piracy and improving cooperation between law enforcement agencies and communities in the fight against this crime.

Goods piracy trade has undesirable consequences for people, business and government. The involvement of organised crime groupings in goods piracy trade is responsible for the upsurge in the crime and money laundering. It is apparent that the policing of goods piracy is an enormous task that cannot be successfully achieved or accomplished by the SAPS alone. The involvement of other law enforcement stakeholders such as Customs and Excise and the DTI, is critical. The failure of proactive policing is evident from the presence of pirated goods in the markets, and requires reactive policing to arrest perpetrators and deter potential criminals. The successful prosecution of perpetrators serves as both proactive and reactive crime prevention activities that leads to deterrence.

There is a need to determine how organised criminals are able to force law enforcement officials and politicians to kowtow to them. The emphasis of this study was on proactive activities to protect owners' private property rights in terms of the South African Constitution. Corruption in the SAPS frustrates the fight against goods piracy. Victimisation of the police can be eradicated by adopting proactive approaches to policing. These have to involve intelligence and surveillance in policing, and an active society that works in conjunction with the police and other stakeholders. Proper policing of this crime could discourage perpetrators from committing this crime.

This study could assist the SAPS in policing goods piracy crime. Other law enforcement stakeholders such as Customs and Excise and the DTI, could also benefit from it. It can assist them in customising the guidelines for use in policing goods piracy in their sphere of operation. If law enforcement agencies continue to work in silos, they will fail in the fight against goods piracy.

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Areas and Indicators of Family Life in Families of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders

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Abstract

Quality of life (QOL) is the level of functional well-being in many areas of an individual's life. It is increasingly recognized as a dimension of work in the study of disturbances in the social functioning of the individual. The conceptualization of the results of the quality of family life has been extremely limited so far. In contrast to the quality of individual life, the quality of family life addresses the impact of the quality of individual life on the family – individual interaction and influence because they produce the concept of quality of family life. Having a child with autism spectrum disorder is associated with stress in caring for children, as well as less time for parents to meet their needs. In order to identify areas and indicators of family quality of life in the families of children with autism spectrum disorder we organized two focus groups, the first of which were – 1 doctor, 2 psychologists, 3 therapists, 1 social worker, 2 teachers, and a second focus group with 7 parents who have children with autism spectrum disorder, who come from both rural and urban areas.

Keywords: autism, quality of life, indicators.

1. Introduction

The concept of quality of life appears in the twentieth century in the fields of knowledge such as philosophy, political and social sciences, the issue of “good living being taken over by other fields, such as sociology, urbanism, social geography, social assistance, environmental and medical sciences” (Bălățescu, 2007)

The exact origin of the term Quality of Life (QOL) is not known, but Samuel Ordway and Fairfield Osborn were among the first to use the concept. In 1964, at a political meeting, US President Lyndon B. Johnson used the term quality of life in his speech stating that “goals cannot be measured by the size of our bank account, they can only be measured by the quality of life they lead. our people (Johnson, 1964). In the 1960s, there was a growing interest from scientists in the issue of quality of life. They become interested in the relationship between social and economic indicators of quality of life, but also in their subjective evaluation. After the Second World War, new medical technologies are introduced, which dramatically increase both patients' life expectancy and indirectly their quality of life. In the early 1970s, the concept of quality of life became increasingly popular. Numerous quality of life studies are published in various fields.

According to Oşvat's ideas, quality of life is a multidimensional construct that includes both the involvement of policy makers in addressing well-being, and the development of each dimension and its evaluation. There are several components of well-being both personally (emotionally, motivational, relational) and socially (quality, ease and quantity of services provided) (Oşvat, 2012).

The following definition of quality of life, according to the WHO (1980), allows us to measure the extreme extension of this concept: in which he lives in relation to his goals, expectations, norms and anxieties. It is a very broad concept, influenced in a complex way by the physical health of the subject, the psychological state, the level of independence, the social relations as well as the relationship with the essential elements of his environment. The essential elements of the environment include financial resources, safety, work (job), personal fulfillment, spiritual life (religion, beliefs)" (WHO, 1980).

Quality of Life (QOL) is defined as "an individual's perception of his or her position in life in the context of the culture and value systems in which he or she lives and in relation to goals, expectations, standards, and concerns" (WHOQOL Group, 1993). According to Shu, there are six broad areas for QOL: physical health, psychological state, levels of independence, social relationships, environmental characteristics, and spiritual concerns, including personal beliefs (Shu, 2009).

1.1 Quality of family life

Although research on the quality of individual life has generated enough momentum to lead to an international consensus, the quality of family life is a growing concept. The quality of family life as a result of a policy/program is a natural extension of work on the quality of individual life. The quality of life aspect thus acquires a strong emphasis in the field of disruption of family-centered service delivery models (Poston et al., 2003).

Since the mid-1980s, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of providing family-centered services. This is because the image of the family becomes fused with that of a support unit (Allen, Petr & Gore, 1996; Dunst, Johanson, Trivette & Hamby, 1991; McWilliam & Bailey Jr, 1993; Turnbull, Turbiville & Turnbull, 2000).

Campbell, Converse and Rodgers (1975) conducted some of the first studies on the quality of family life. They assessed the dimensions of satisfaction with the quality of family life through indicators, sets of personal characteristics and perceptions of relationships with family members. Based on this study, it was highlighted that a major contribution to satisfying the family quality of life is the relationship with the children and the spouse. In their study, the authors found lower life satisfaction and quality of well-being in areas such as living standards, savings, housing, number of schools and neighborhoods.

In contrast to the quality of individual life, the quality of family life addresses the impact of the quality of individual life on the family – individual interaction and influence because they produce the concept of quality of family life.

Family adjustment is often used as an indicator of the quality of family life. It refers to "the quality of family life at the systemic level, such as the well-being, competence, strengths and weaknesses of a family" (Shek & Lee, 2007).

Addressing the quality of family life is "generating a paradigm shift" in the provision of services for people with disabilities, as it moves from fixation to support, from deficits to strength and from child to family, as a support center (Turnbull et al., 2000). Families in which there is a child with autism spectrum disorder are well supported when their unique efforts are

built on a family-centered intervention model based on strengths, rather than focusing on their weaknesses.

Parents and family members of a child with autism spectrum disorder received a positive focus on the quality of life of the individual, but often expressed the need for service providers to consider the whole family system and the quality of life. In response to this need, the quality of family life began to emerge as a valuable concept at the beginning of the millennium, and its assessments began to emerge shortly thereafter.

The study of the literature shows that many efforts have been made to assess certain areas of family life in which there is a child with autism spectrum disorder, such as leisure and recreation in the family, lack of spontaneity in these activities, stress, burden and worry of family caregivers, impact on siblings. However, there have been few attempts to measure family life in which there is a child with autism spectrum disorder in a holistic global way, perhaps because his or her nature is complex.

1.2 Dimensions of quality of life

The concept of quality of life being approached multidimensional, can refer to the standard of living of the population starting from aspects such as: economic situation, living conditions, level of education, social life, income, and is consistent with experience, values and expectations individual (Oşvat, 2012; Pop, 2010).

There is a distinction in the literature between the quality of individual and family life. Given that, in the field of developmental disabilities, as well as in the case of autism spectrum disorder, the emphasis is on a model of family-centered service delivery, the quality of family life should be a natural extension of the quality of individual life (Turnbull et al., 2004).

Compared to the quality of individual life, the quality of family life addresses the impact of the quality of individual life on the family and the interaction of individual members, because they produce the concept of quality of family life (Poston et al., 2003).

Based on the work of a team of international researchers, a consensus document for the quality of individual life was developed, which focused on conceptualization, measurement and application (Verdugo, Schalock, Keith & Stancliffe, 2005). Eight areas for the individual quality of life of people with disabilities were included; (1) emotional well-being; (2) interpersonal relationships; (3) material well-being; (4) personal development; (5) physical well-being; (6) self-determination; and (7) inclusion and social rights. The areas listed for individual quality of life were considered to be applicable to family quality of life as well.

The literature reveals that ten areas of quality of family life were developed, which included 6 individual orientations: health, productive well-being, positive emotions, physical and social well-being, social support. Family adjustment includes the daily interactions of the family, financial well-being and the relationship with the parents. The quality of family life is a relatively new construction that focuses on family-centered practices and individual quality of life (Algood, 2013).

2. Methodology

In order to identify areas and indicators of family quality in the families of children with autism spectrum disorder in Bihor County we organized two focus groups, the first of which were – 1 doctor, 2 psychologists, 3 therapists, 1 social worker, 2 teachers education, and a second focus group with 7 parents who have children with autism spectrum disorder, who come from both rural and urban areas.

Participants in the group meetings were asked to identify those areas and related indicators that best capture aspects of family quality of life. The following 6 important areas of quality of life were thus identified in such a study: health and services, education (formal and informal), material / housing status, family, social relations (social / relational – leisure, physical environment / neighborhood, interfaith closeness, etc.), subjective / psychological well-being (emotional life, etc.). For each area, participants identified related indicators.

2.1 Focus group results

INDICATORS:

Domain: health and services

Specialists: number of cases / family doctor, number of cases / specialist (neuropsychiatrist), number of cases / therapist (behavioral therapist, speech therapist, physiotherapist), prevalence of cases, situations in the basic population, genetic predisposition (existence or absence of similar cases within the family), existing therapeutic services.

Family: registration with the specialist doctor (neuropsychiatrist), enrollment in a specialized therapeutic program, number of therapy sessions / year, number of check-ups at the specialist doctor, classification in a degree of disability / existence of personal assistant (family member), the existence of associated pathologies (epilepsy, psychomotor retardation, ADHD, etc.), establishing a drug treatment scheme, following a personalized diet, parents suffering from chronic diseases, parents suffering from psychiatric diseases, siblings suffering from chronic diseases, brothers with autism spectrum pathology, expenses with therapeutic programs, need for therapeutic / intervention treatments, number of tantrums (behavioral crises), quality of associated health care (need for a special medical attitude), access to specialized services, the share of expenses with specialized services.

INDICATORS:

Domain: formal education

Specialists: schools / kindergartens / specialized centers (on therapeutic intervention) in relation to the needs, the figure regarding the school integration at county – urban / rural level, the school and vocational orientation of the child with ASD.

Family: attendance of kindergarten / school / center, access to the desired school / kindergarten / center, results / school / therapeutic progress, number of hours in which the child receives support from parents / siblings for the continuity of the therapeutic process, number of meetings between therapist and parent for discussing the child's therapeutic situation (progress), number of absences from the therapeutic program / school, number of interactions (positive / negative) with group colleagues, parents' integration aspirations, number of relational / contextual undesirable behavioral reactions, distance from home to school – with what is traveled (on foot, by car / school / kindergarten / center, by public transport).

Domain: informal education

Specialists: number of specialized therapy centers, number of events and activities dedicated to the situation of the child with ASD organized by specialists, number of means of transport to ensure home-school transport.

Family: number of activities and events in which parents participate with children with ASD – theater, shows, concerts, trips, celebrations, contests / competitions, number of extracurricular activities in which the child participates, leisure activities organized with colleagues.

INDICATORS:

Domain: material status and housing

Family: income / family member, income obtained from other sources (sponsorships, dividends, etc.), high family expenses (installments, etc.), safety of parents' workplace, employment of family members (full-time, part-time) , part time), dwelling – personal property / rent / other form, number of rooms, child own room, durable goods / endowment dwelling, other property (land, etc.), car, books, toys, sums spent for complementary therapeutic intervention, amounts spent by parents for supportive therapy as a parent (parents / siblings) of the child with ASD, positioning of the home (suburb, center...), neighbors – quality of relationship, daily basket / week / month, quality / quantity of food , how many meals the child eats per day, clothing / supplies, dentist costs, parent volunteer, child pocket money, participation of the child in camps / excursions / activities / extracurricular therapeutic courses paid.

INDICATORS:

Domain: family – organized family – marriage or cohabitation, single parent family, active involvement of parents and other members in the evolution and development of the child with ASD, involvement of the child with ASD in the family routine, quality of parent-child relationship, quality of parent-child relationship, quality communication in the family, sources of satisfaction of the child with ASD (emotional relationship, reward system), relationships with other members of the extended family, who deals with the continuity of the therapeutic program of the child (mother / father / siblings), the number of hours allocated by parent (mother / father) of the child, how many hours do the parents allocate to the child's school activities, how many hours do the parents allocate to the structured leisure activities of the child with ASD, the distribution of family activities – active and functional inclusion of the child with ASD in someone else's care (therapist / extended family / supervisor), reasons for family quarrels, transgender traditions family / values (ideas / ideals / prejudices / values).

INDICATORS

Domain: social relations (family context / neighborhood / interfamily proximity)

Family – number of contacts with extended family, number of leisure activities spent with parents / siblings / grandparents, interactions with other children (except colleagues, relatives), family friends of parents, activities in which they participate with other children, organized therapeutic activities for leisure, quality of relationship (acceptance / non-acceptance) with neighbors, type of help received from neighbors (support, acceptance), help sought and received from the church, safety of the living area, playground nearby housing, private and specialized playgrounds for children with ASD, the quality of the parent / child relationship, social interaction skills, social interactions with other families that have a child with ASD.

INDICATORS

Domain: subjective / psychological well-being (emotional life, etc.) – parents and child are in a process of psychotherapy (psychotherapeutic support and counseling – acceptance and psycho-emotional management that involves the existence of a child with ASD in the family), implementation a therapeutic program aimed at knowing and managing emotions and feelings, identifying the states of satisfaction and frustration of the child, developing skills to relate to others.

3. Conclusions

New indicators were identified in all researched areas: health and services, formal education, informal education, financial status and housing, family, social relations (family context / neighborhood / interfamilial closeness), subjective / psychological well-being (emotional life, etc.).

Having a child with autism spectrum disorder is associated with stress in caring for children, as well as less time for parents to meet their needs. Compared to the parents of children who normally develop, parents of children with autism spectrum disorder report a higher family difficulty, thus being exposed to a higher risk of physical and mental stress (Fox et al., 2002; Lee et al., 2008; Schalock et al., 2002). In addition, it has been observed that the level of emotional distress in parents is associated with the level of the child's behavioral disorder and does not correlate with the child's ability to communicate functionally (Allik, Larsson & Smedje, 2006; Baker, Blacher, Crnic & Edelbrock, 2002; Fombonne, 2005). At the same time, there are financial challenges, because a child with autism spectrum disorder is associated with high medical costs due to therapies, compared to the costs incurred in an unaffected family.

The impact that children with autism spectrum disorders have on families of origin falls into three general categories: (1) stress, depression or the need for care resulting from the child's disability; (2) how the child affects the functioning of the family; and (3) adaptations to family changes caused by disability (Algood, 2013; Hoffman, Marquis, Poston, Summers & Turnbull, 2006).

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Forms of Human Violence Exacerbated in the COVID-19 Pandemic Period: Theoretical Approaches and Conclusions of Current Studies

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Abstract

Human violence is, above all, a recurring theme of contemporary societies, a worrying phenomenon that requires the prevention and intervention of the society of each society. The forms of violence are more and more conditioned, and we dress in new ways and the context of the manifestation becoming a fatality with care for people everywhere coexist. Although my doctoral dissertation aims at “school violence”, we cannot ask ourselves, take care to restrict their limits, of social control, poverty and frustration to accumulate the emergency period and social control, the institution in Romania must pandemic Covid-19, and how will the psychosocial impact be addressed at this time in terms of social relations and social lives. We approach in this paper the theoretical aspect and to supervise information about the scientist of this subject. We will capitalize on this material on some recent, careful international studies and information that attest to domestic violence and can be created over time during quarantine, and the poverty line is reached by vulnerable groups is the premise for many delicate, which can already be discovered.

Keywords: violence, pandemic, risk factors, vulnerable groups, crime.

1. Introduction

Human violence is a complex phenomenon, which has psychological, social, cultural, and economic determinations highlighted by the extent of its forms of manifestation and the interrelationships it entails. Beyond the diversity of the phenomenon of human violence, both at the national and global levels, its dimensions require, as a first step, its knowledge, and the establishment of conceptual, thematic, and operational categories, indispensable for an integrated approach.

In contemporary society, violence and vandalism are the most common forms of aggression, with an upward trend in recent decades, in terms of quantity but also their severity, both among children, and adults, with implications that affect all social categories, regardless of the age or social status of those involved. Thus, the phenomenon of human violence has been at the center of recent concerns of politicians, opinion leaders, journalists, teachers, and especially, for researchers in various fields of social sciences. The current social situation requires an analysis of how certain forms of violence manifested themselves more virulently during the COVID

pandemic 19 and how the psychosocial impact of the moment on the quality of relationships and social life of young people will be reflected.

2. Defining the concept of violence

Regarding the definition of the concept of violence, we do not find a consensus of researchers in the literature. The World Health Organization defines violence as the intentional use of force or power, actual or in the form of threats, against oneself, another person or against a group or community that results in or is highly likely to result in injury, death, psychological impairment, developmental impairment or deprivation.

The literature operates with different definitions, some depending on the severity of the forms of manifestation (Ferreol & Neculau, 2003) or the types of violence encountered (Chesnais, 1981) or the manifestations of these violent behaviors, or the criteria by which they are distinguished (Debarbieux et al., 1999), or the factors that contribute to their onset (Floro, 1996).

Chris Gittins (2004) discusses three definitions of violence: first, it refers to the definition of violence in the ENCARTA (1999) dictionary, which refers to the use of physical force to injure or destroy something. Another definition refers to the illegal use of unjustified force, as well as the effect created by the threat; the definition used by D. Olweus (1993) according to which violence or violent behavior is aggressive behavior in which an individual uses his body or object, including a weapon, to strike or cause discomfort to an individual. Many opinions (Bujdoiu, 2001, Allen & Anderson, 2017) argue that violence is relative because it relates to and depends on the social, legal, and political codes existing in the society in which it manifests itself. Violence is more about culture, education, context, and the qualification of a fact as violent depends largely on the social conventions in force at that time (Banciu, 2005; Benbenishty & Astor, 2005; Berindei, 2006; Baci, 2011). However, it is found that there are populations, communities that almost do not know the violence, while others are quite violent. Violence is a slippery term that covers a very wide range of situations, and most changes the physical, emotional, symbolic situations, practices and relationships, but it is also a controversial term (Allen & Anderson, 2017).

Researchers and practitioners use different terms in their descriptions of violent incidents, such as aggression, violence, and intimidation (Boncu, 2004; Allen & Anderson, 2017), and sometimes they use these terms alternately (Astor, Benbenishty, Pitner & Zeira, 2004).

The term aggression comes from the Latin *ad* + *grere*, which means “to go to ...”, and was later used as aggression, meaning “to go to, to attack”. Subsequent attempts to explain aggression converge towards that destructive and violent behavior by which one tends or intends to harm another, destroy him, coerce him, etc. (Popescu-Neveanu, 1978; Laplanche & Pontalis, 1994; Baron, 1977). Aggression as a concept, occurs in different contexts, being used both to describe an attitude or a certain type of personality, and to characterize certain behaviors, or as an impulsive or instinctual expression, but without having, directly, conscious control. Frequently, in the life situations of children and adults, aggression is encountered permanently or periodically, taking the form of quarrels, vandalism, or images in the media, appearing both as aggressors and victims, or in quality of witnesses.

The notion of violence comes from the Latin *violere*, meaning “force”, meaning power, physical force, used to dominate a person. Violence must be differentiated from aggression (Allen & Anderson, 2017), a more general type of hostile behavior that can be physical, verbal, or passive, constantly manifested in different social environments, including the school environment. However, it is difficult to differentiate between the two concepts of aggression and violence. M. Floro (1996) tried such a differentiation, using three criteria: the functional, topological, and ethical criteria. The unprecedented expansion of social networks has moved this traumatic

phenomenon for children and adolescents in the virtual environment (Velicu, 2014; Velicu & Blaya, 2018).

3. Types and forms of violence

Violence takes different forms, depending on times, places, circumstances, designating completely different realities. Violent behaviors are ubiquitous in contemporary society and include a variety of forms of manifestation in different areas of society, being classified according to the degree of involvement of actors, the relationships between them, generators, means used and objectives pursued. At the same time, it has been constantly enriched with new, more, and more complex forms.

The World Health Organization (Krug et al., 2002: 5) identifies three major forms of violence: collective violence (which includes acts of terrorism, organized crime, etc.), intrapersonal (suicidal behavior, self-harm), interpersonal violence (domestic, family or partner violence, or community violence).

J. Galtung presented in 2002 at an interdisciplinary meeting of UNESCO experts (Bonea, 2015: 192) a classification of violent acts grouped into two categories: the first category includes aggressive, defensive, deliberate and involuntary violence, and the second category concerns intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup and intersocial violence.

The concept of violence is found in a multitude of forms in society, it is determined by certain factors related to the education of individuals, access to information resources and their evolution in today's society, their mentality and interests in society, political trajectory, religiosity, changes in the family, personal experiences that make their mark on behavior (Sandu, 2008; Bonea, 2015; McMahon, Martinez, Reddy, Espelage & Anderman, 2017a).

Drăgănescu (2018) distinguishes the typological situations related to both individual and collective violence, as well as the three categories of factors that generate these types of violence. Numerous researchers (Neculau & Ferreol, 2003; Liiceanu, 2003; Allen & Anderson, 2017; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018) considered it necessary to distinguish between private and collective violence. The private one includes both criminal violence, which includes the three types: deadly violence (murders, murders, executions), bodily violence (beatings and bodily harm), and sexual violence, as well as non-criminal violence, which refers to suicide / suicide attempts and accidents. The second category is collective violence in three subcategories: the violence of citizens against power (acts of terrorism, strikes, and revolutions), the violence of power against citizens (state terrorism, industrial violence) and paroxysmal violence (war) (Neculau, 2003: 6).

It is found that modernity and the urban environment have produced changes in the values and aspirations of individuals, generating new forms of violence. Lack of education, poverty, poor information have led to contexts in which violence has become a tolerated behavior, even accepted, which gradually became natural and frequent (Liiceanu, 2003: 47). We notice today that there is a rich phenomenology of violence that requires increased attention from the social body and policymakers. In addition to the known forms of violence – physical violence, psychological, sexual, economic and social violence – enshrined in the literature, modern life has brought to attention new forms of violence in the reality of the present: bullying – psychological violence, cyberbullying – internet violence, mobbing – discrimination and harassment in the workplace, drug-related violence, trafficking in human beings, urban violence, school violence, sexual violence, economic violence, social violence (Cace, 2010; Bonea, 2019; Perkins & Barry, 2020).

Other authors have classified violence based on the analysis of the source that generates it, thus distinguishing between proactive violent behavior (when subject to a purpose) and reactive (Crick & Dodge, 1994, according to Benga & Opre 2015).

School violence, as a form of violence manifested in contemporary society, is strongly encountered in school life, taking different forms: from verbal and psychological violence (insults, threats, insults, teasing) to physical violence (beatings, fights), degradation of goods (written on walls, broken windows, damaged furniture), refusal to work, absenteeism, disruption of courses and even theft, assaults with weapons, sexual violence, drug use (Axinte & Sorici, 2015). Sociological studies show that, lately, there is a sharp increase in delinquent manifestations. Thus, it is observed the shift of the share of antisocial acts, from older age groups to smaller groups; exceeding the limit from which we can characterize an antisocial act committed by a minor only as deviant or pre-delinquency; emphasizing the seriousness of crimes committed by adolescents (crimes such as murder, robbery, rape); the alarming increase of the recidivism phenomenon among some categories of adolescents (Bujdoi, 2001: 89). We distinguish here between “evasions behaviors”, i.e. those more common forms of school deviance, categorized as “disguised defenses”, such as: running away from school, absenteeism, school dropout, drug addiction, suicide, etc. and “open defenses”, respectively the most common forms such as vandalism and violent behavior. Of course, each of them is generated by a specific causality and manifests itself in different conditions, individually or collectively (Neamțu, 2003: 180; Sălăvăstru, 2003: 129; Drăgănescu, 2018: 427).

The phenomenon of violence has been and still is studied and analyzed differently from one society to another, in terms of different theses, guidelines and explanatory theories that complement or exclude each other, but each, seeking to identify the causes and mechanisms that determine these behaviors.

4. Causes of human violence

Recent studies consider that the most common situations in which we encounter patterns of violent behavior are: family, social environment, and media (Sălăvăstru, 2003; Bonea, 2015; Velicu & Blaya, 2018; Stonard, 2020). Analyzing the first category, most studies conclude that when violence is practiced in the family or children are victims/witnesses of domestic violence and they will become violent; it is seen that children from families in which both parents were raised with the help of corporal punishment become violent. Violent acts often occur when the street becomes a friendlier place than family for many abused and abused children (Hagan & McCarthy, 1998). Another category of causes is related to the social environment, supported by the literature (Baciu, 2011; Drăgănescu, 2018), which attests that, in those communities where aggressive behavior patterns are accepted, even admired, aggression is easily transmitted to next generations. A multitude of studies is currently part of the violence generated by the media (Velicu, 2006, 2014; Velicu & Blaya, 2018, Stonard, 2020), pointing out that, in particular, television broadcasts daily cases of aggressive physical and verbal behavior, sexual and psychological.

In general, violence is largely associated with difficult urban areas, where misery and poverty predominate (Hagan, 1998). Therefore, numerous studies (Dascălu & Singh, 2012; Cace, 2010; Drăgănescu, 2018; Perkins & Barry, 2020) attest as favorable sources of violence, the family factor, the social factor, and the individual factor.

Regarding the family factor, it is considered that the genesis of deviance is the education received in the family. Newer research, conducted to establish the role of the family in the etiology of deviance, has identified a variety of causal factors such as socialization, emotional climate, family cohesion, economic and cultural status, etc. (Sandu, 2008; Cace, 2010; Bonea, 2019). Regarding the individual factor, it is seen that they are constituted in two categories: constitutional factors, related to the hereditary dowry and the neuro-psychic structure and the

particularities of the individual's personality (Boncu, 2004; Baci, 2011; McMahon et al., 2017a; Drăgănescu, 2018; Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018).

Referring to the social factor, it is believed that it offers many sources of influence that can induce, stimulate, and maintain violence. Thus, social inequalities, the economic situation, the media, the diminution of social control mechanisms, the crisis of moral values, dysfunctions at the level of the factors responsible for the education of young people, the lack of cooperation of the institutions involved in education. At the societal level, we distinguish economic causes, sociocultural or religious causes, psychological or pedagogical causes (Neamțu, 2003: 210). Studying the phenomenon of violence in schools, we appreciate based on theoretical considerations and research findings, provided by the literature, that this behavior is based on several groups of causes: psycho-individual causes, respectively, certain characteristics of individuals who associate with violent behaviors, such as: low tolerance for frustration, difficulties in adapting to school discipline, negative self-image, emotional instability, lack or insufficient development of self-control mechanisms, tendency to addictive behavior, poor empathic ability; family causes, such as: socio-affective climate (tense relationships between parents, violent attitudes of parents towards the child, environment without emotional security); family type (origin of students from disorganized families); economic conditions of the family (insufficient income); family size (large number of children in the family, a situation that often involves the accentuation of the phenomenon of poverty); low level of education of parents; another category is represented by school causes, materialized in: difficulties of student-teacher communication, imposing the authority of teachers, excessively authoritarian teaching styles, distortions in student evaluation, teachers' prejudices regarding students' ethnicity, age, as well as his teaching experience, busy school curricula (Boncu, 2004; Astor, Benbenishty, Pitner & Zeira, 2004; Perkins & Barry, 2020); Causes induced by the social context: mass media (Velicu, 2014; Velicu & Blaya, 2018; Bonea, 2019) which, through the values they promote, as well as through the consequences on the way of spending free time, greatly influences the behaviors of young people, offering models aggressive behavior or violence, through movies, video games or programs with aggressively promoted content; the influence of the group of friends and the entourage outside the school, the "neighborhood gangs" the disadvantaged areas, the peripheral neighborhoods of the cities (Hagan, 1998), with all the characteristics that some of them have a major influence on the behaviors of young people.

Most researchers seem to agree that violence is multicausal (Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018; Potâng & Botnari, 2018; Stonard, 2020), which means that no factor – viewed separately, is responsible for violent behavior.

The specialized literature concludes with a quasi-unanimity of opinions that aggression has at its origin multiple causes, social, psychological, medical, etc. (Nielsen & Einarsen, 2018; Potâng & Botnari, 2018). It is unanimously acknowledged that the main reasons are associated with numerous risk factors (external or internal), identified at the individual, family, school, group of friends, community, or society. These risk factors act during the life of the individual until the moment of committing the violent act (Balica, 2008). There are also a series of *situational factors* that influence the production of the violent act, related to the relationship between the victim and the aggressor, the ways of producing violent acts, etc.

All psychological approaches claim that the motivating processes involved in the deviant act are based on a causal determination generated by the mismatch between requirements and possibilities. Motivation sums up many component factors: impulses, stimuli, intentions, tendencies, etc. The frustrations resulting from the gap between requirements and possibilities lead to an internal or motivational instigation, to aggression (Dobrescu, 2010: 47). The reasons for deviant behavior can be both "exogenous", having an external source exerted by social influence, and "endogenous", intrinsic. Studies and research focused on these theories have shown

that psychiatric disorders are involved in the personality of individuals, respectively in the orientation of antisocial behaviors.

Both the risk factors and the causes that determine violence, identified in the literature or by contemporary sociological and psychological theories, attest to the fact that young people who have such models (family, social environment, etc.), will show violent behaviors about to the others.

But frustrations can be possible, often noticed and important condition for the manifestation of aggressive behavior (Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer & Sears, 1939). Avoiding feelings of frustration, on a personal and social level, can also mean avoiding aggression.

5. Forms of violence exacerbated during the pandemic: Conclusions of national and international studies and reports on the social effects of the coronavirus pandemic (Covid-19) on the individual and the manifestations of violent behavior

According to the report “Pandemic and standard of living. Social protection policies” published on 25 April 2020, by the Quality of Life Research Institute and the National Institute of Economic Research, Costin C. Kiritescu, Romanian Academy, among the national social effects caused by the coronavirus pandemic are the *economic crisis* that produces effects socially, effects that are already being felt and will be visible in the immediate and medium-term. It can be seen here that this economic crisis has implications for the individual and the fight against the spread of the pandemic has an obvious effect on his standard of living, the occurrence of crimes specific to the period, and the limitation of social control. The incomes of the population decreased being affected by the pandemic, during which time most citizens were unable to carry out their daily work, having limited opportunities to work from home and to take care of the needs of family and children. The degradation of the quality of life of the population appears in time and the socio-economic consequences will be highlighted in the coming years. The most affected groups, classified as vulnerable, target people who have lost their jobs through layoffs entering technical unemployment, those who have recently returned to the country, who have worked abroad and are left without income, as well as those without occupation; represent those made redundant who are not eligible for unemployment, as well as the poor who are not eligible for the guaranteed minimum income/emergency aid, or those who lived off agriculture. The social protection system, although in continuous evolution in the last 30 years (Marin & Stănculescu, 2019), is insufficiently developed to deal with social events of the magnitude of a pandemic.

The establishment of quarantine with specific measures of social and physical distance and the restriction of the rights of the movement of persons was a real attempt to maintain a balanced mental state. Against the background of the frustrations accumulated during this period and the precarious financial situation, the crimes manifested themselves mainly in the sphere of intra-family relations, increasing the number of domestic violence and in the economic-financial sphere appearing new forms of crime such as trafficking in medical equipment and products, smuggling of immigrants, theft, fraud through telephony and cyberbullying, cybercrime (source: Interpol, Europol). Regarding domestic violence, many states (Germany, France, Spain, Argentina, Canada, etc.) have reported an increase in aid requests from their victims by over 30-40% (Cyprus, Singapore, Australia).

In the context of the measures caused by the SARS-CoV2 pandemic, specialists in education and political and social sciences in Romania claim that students from disadvantaged backgrounds do not have equal opportunities in education, because they do not have the means to learn online. Specialists (Florian et al., 2020) think believe that they are the most exposed in the context of the pandemic, being included in the groups with the highest degree of vulnerability.

Studies show that in rural areas, cases of poverty and social exclusion are more common. They specify that, according to Eurostat, in 2019 the early school leaving rate was 15.3% nationally and 22.4% in rural areas. In Romania, 32.5% of the population is at risk of poverty or social exclusion: a percentage of 57.6% of families with more than two children but also 48.8% of single-parent families with dependent children are at risk poverty or social exclusion; Regarding the percentage of children under 16, it is 37.9% and the percentage of young people aged 16-24 who are at risk of poverty or social exclusion is 37.4% (Florian et al., 2020). The results of numerous studies show that young people who are neglected and abused are also less likely to engage in school work and more likely to conflict with teachers. Moreover, neither the school nor the young people on the street can specify exactly what is the influence of certain factors, namely whether these risk factors or triggers, such as the family situation, are a disadvantage for those from disorganized families, for whom the street represents an environment conducive to committing crimes (Hagan & McCarthy, 1998: 78).

Recent studies show that behavioral changes in children in pandemics were evident with the introduction of the quarantine regime. Behavioral changes in children, reported by parents in the pandemic target manifestations such as defiance, frequent conflicts between siblings and increased jealousy, anger and hostility, irritability, difficulty concentrating, sleep, low motivation and productivity, disorganization, pessimistic thoughts, anxiety, refusal to do something, frequent and explosive nervous breakdowns, excessive desire for validation, spending time in front of the TV screen.

One of the most famous psychologists in Romania, Mircea Miclea, professor at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at Babeş-Bolyai University, researcher, founder of the cognitive school in Romanian psychology, former Minister of Education in Romania, speaking in an interview about the traces left by the 2 months of isolation, states that although she is not aware, the signs of anxiety (hypersensitivity and hyper-reactivity) will be obvious and estimates that in the long run, about 8-10% will have a post-traumatic stress disorder, respectively an intensification and a chronic state of anxiety or depression.

The World Vision study conducted in 2020 included 101 children and young people aged between 8 and 17 from 13 in several countries: Romania, Albania, Bangladesh, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mali, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Peru, Philippines, Sierra Leone, and Syrian refugee children living in refugee camps near the Turkish-Syrian border and highlighted that the feelings felt during this period by the children and adolescents interviewed are emotional stress, anxiety, anger, uncertainty, and concern and that three major factors such as school closures, social distancing, and growing poverty had an impact on children's emotional well-being. The study found that more than 91% of children and adolescents felt stressed or experiencing disturbing experiences due to the COVID-19 pandemic, while 75% of children and adolescents found it emotionally difficult to cope against the restrictions of physical and social distancing. In many of the countries in this study, neither students nor teachers were prepared to switch to online education: not all children have access to the Internet, teachers were not prepared for online education, students in the most disadvantaged communities Vulnerable people are discriminated against during this period, and social distancing measures, although important for protection against the new coronavirus, have led respondents (75%) to find it emotionally difficult to cope with restrictions. Thus, among the negative consequences of the restrictions that affected them are "loneliness, lack of collaboration, teamwork, changes in diet or sleep, limited internet access in some communities." Adolescents say they want to help fight the spread of COVID-19 and get involved in raising awareness about the importance of protective measures against the spread of the virus.

In the study "School in an emergency state. The access of school children in Romania to online education", made by the Romanian Institute for Evaluation and Strategy, in April 2020, shows that only 68% of respondents have dedicated access to at least one device (desktop, laptop,

tablet) and even if the percentage related to the existence of the internet in the household is quite high (93%), with a fairly strong connection (85%) the percentage is discrepant when comparing data from rural to urban areas.

The survey on parents' perception of online education, during the state of emergency, conducted between 29 April and 6 May 2020, by the National Federation of Associations of parents in pre-university education, which investigated how students perform activities online learning, had 4,852 respondent parents, mostly from urban areas (81.2%). They believe that online education cannot replace face-to-face education at school (80.1%) and only 19.9% of respondents believe that this type of interaction can replace classical education.

Regarding domestic violence before the outbreak of the pandemic, the data published in the Activity Report of the Public Ministry for 2019, show that, in Romania, six out of 100 defendants sent to trial are minors; daily, prosecutors sue 11 minors, one of whom is under arrest. As a percentage, out of 100 criminals, 2.4 commit domestic violence. The data show that aggressions between spouses and those against parents, or against their children, reach alarming levels.

6. Discussions and reflections

In the context of the COVID pandemic 19, we are witnessing a reversal of the value grid of humanity, thus enhancing the perfect opportunity to trigger personal anxieties. The literature argues that the reasons, circumstances, and causes that usually lead to aggressive behavior are multiple (Tutty, 2005; Tower, 2006): these can be economic, political, social, psychological, biological, relational, communicative, and contextual. However, we cannot generalize or say that only families with large financial problems, with a low level of education, or those who live on the outskirts of the city are aggressive families. Also, we cannot say that all those who experienced childhood violence (as witnesses or as victims) will practice such behaviors in adulthood. However, numerous studies conclude that the frequency of domestic violence between partners is higher in poor families, with many children, with a low level of education, where, usually, a lot of alcohol is consumed and parents are unemployed (Voinea, 2005; Bonea, 2016). On the other hand, like all sociological and psychological theories attest, domestic violence leaves its mark on the development of young people and the manifestation of violent behaviors. According to Bandura (1977), we can say that minors are prone to imitate the behavior of parents and adults in general.

It remains to investigate how the pandemic influenced aggressive behavior and what medium and long-term effects this influence will have and how the psychosocial impact of the moment on the quality of relationships and social life in the next period will be reflected. My future research will also focus on the consequences of restrictions, social control, poverty, and frustrations accumulated during the state of emergency and social control, established in Romania due to the COVID-19 pandemic on social behavior in schools.

7. Conclusion

In the constructive approach to violent behavior, concern for aggression is one of the key factors. Understanding what determines such behavior contributes greatly to identifying the best ways to intervene in such cases. The specialized literature, through the elaborated theories, attests that aggression is manifested either in the form of accentuated and frequent fits of anger or in the form of violent behaviors or accentuated impulsivity. In explaining intergroup conflicts, sociological theories are the ones that have great relevance, and psychological and psychosocial ones gain more weight in the interpretation of intrapersonal and interpersonal conflicts.

Violence has several negative effects on those who witness or experience it, and children are especially sensitive to their harm. The general situation is worrying, as violence has now become an issue facing all societies, which requires a whole-of-society position and the development of strategies for investigation, prevention, and control. Fortunately, many studies have provided solid arguments for the development of educational and social programs that have advocated for the promotion of nonviolent means of interaction and regulation of social life and thus, various programs have begun to be applied with positive results in some states, succeeding to prevent and reduce this phenomenon.

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