

Financial Opportunities and Auto-aggression Amongst Adolescents in Croatia

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION

Complex transitional changes in Croatia, lack of employment security and a large number of traumatized and unemployed individuals still strongly influence family functioning, the distribution of family roles as well as the capacity of parents to provide adequate emotional support to adolescents who are growing up in such families.

AIMS

The aim of our study was to examine how many adolescents in the general population (students of secondary schools in Zagreb, Croatia) show auto-aggressive behaviors and whether their auto-aggressive behavior is dependent upon the financial circumstances of the family in which they grow up.

METHODS

The study was conducted on 701 adolescents (both male and female with ages ranging 14-19 years). To determine the family financial circumstances we used a specially designed structured questionnaire with family and demographic data. To test auto-aggression we used the validated 'Scale of auto-destructiveness' (USA).

RESULTS

A significant social factor associated with aggressiveness is the parents financial situation ($F(2,548)=4,604$, $p=0,010$), since adolescents from financially poorer families show greater aggressiveness. The results showed that adolescents who live in below-average financial conditions demonstrate more auto-aggressive behavior than adolescents living in average or above-average family financial circumstances.

CONCLUSIONS

Financial deprivation and perception of financial stress significantly affects the incidence of auto-aggression among adolescents. Through this research we emphasize the importance of social support to parents of adolescents who grow up in financially challenged families as well as to target key preventive interventions related to working in partnership with such families.