

Interpersonal inmate violence in French prisons: results of the Tartare survey

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Inserm U 897 – Equipe PPCT - Bordeaux (France)

BACKGROUND

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Background (1)

- In France, the prison population is increasing steadily (number / 100,000 inhabitants):
 - 91.8 in 2005
 - 104.1 in 2008
 - France is 16th /27 in Europe.
 - (Slovenia = 65.6 ; Leetonia = 291)
- The number of prison beds is 55,000 for about 62,252 prisoners (2009) in 193 centers (24,341 prison staff).

Background (2)

- Average density is 125 % with peaks over 200 % (n=6) and 340 % in New Caledonia
- The percentage of inmates awaiting trial is **25.6 %** in 2010 (34.9 in 2005).

Background (3)

- According to prisoners and staff, prison is :
 - a violent place for 85 %
 - a dangerous place for 59 % of staff and 67 % of prisoners
- Between **2000** and **2008** :
 - Reported incidents increased (+155 %)
 - Assault against staff increased (+ 20 %)

Background (4)

➤ Different types of violences

- Physical (self or hetero)
- Psychological
- Racket
- Sexual assault
- Robbery, vandalism

OBJECTIVES

Objectives

- 1/ To identify individual and environmental factors associated with violence in prison
- 2/ To compile results to propose innovative prevention strategies

POPULATION AND METHODS

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Population and Methods

Population

- All male inmates in jail (awaiting trial or misdemeanants) (Bordeaux, France)
- About 800 inmates are incarcerated in this jail and the occupation rate is almost 200 %

Population and Methods

Data Collection

- Inmates were face-to-face interviewed by a trained psychologist or a medical doctor
- Interviews were carried out in the parlours
- They lasted between one and two hours
- From May to October 2009

Population and Methods

Questionnaire (1)

- **1. Socio-demographic variables**

age, matrimonial status, educational level, housing ownership and country of birth

- **2. Imprisonment and imprisonment conditions**

Sentence, charges for the imprisonment, living conditions in the prison and in the cell: noise, smell, brightness, privacy, hygiene, friends in the prison, work and other activities

- **3. Suicidal behaviours**

Suicidal ideation

Suicide attempts



Lifetime and
during imprisonment

Population and Methods

Questionnaire (2)

- **4. Impulsivness**

the Barratt Impulsivness Scale

- **5. Psychopathology**

Hyperactivity and attention deficit

Anxiety and depression

Antisocial personality

} The Adult Behavior Checklist (ABCL)

- **6. Mental health** services utilization during imprisonment

- **7. Violence act** (victim or perpetrator)

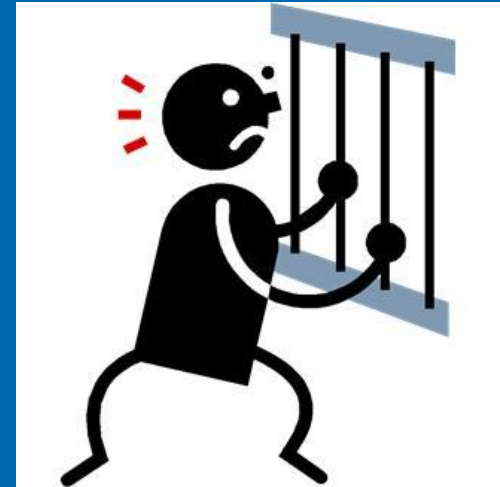
Frequency and types of sustained and perpetrated violences

Inmates proposals

- **Separate** Inmates (disabled, long sentence ...)
 - More walk and activities
 - More sport
 - Reduce the inmate number per cell
 - More work
- | |
|------|
| 33 % |
| 27 % |
| 20 % |
| 19 % |
| 17 % |

RESULTS

Results (1)



➤ **N = 375 prisoners**

- Sentenced prisoners: 195 (52 %)
- Awaiting trial: 180 (48 %)

➤ **Age :** average 36 years [18-78]

Results

➤ Victim of Violence :

During last 12 months

n = 164 → 45 %



➤ Perpetrator of violence:

During last 12 months

n = 50 → 14 %



Results



12 months



Victim of violences

Perpetrator of violences

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| ➤ Psychological violence | 73 % | ➤ Psychological violence : | 74 % |
| ➤ Physical violence | 51 % | ➤ Physical violence : | 38 % |
| ➤ Racket | 23 % | ➤ Vandalism : | 20 % |
| ➤ Sexual assault | 5 % | ➤ Racket : | 10 % |
| ➤ Vandalism | 5 % | ➤ Sexual assault : | 0.0 % |

Factors associated with physical violence (sustained or perpetrated)



Perpetrated violences

	OR	95 CI
Age [18-25]	4.5	[1.9 – 10.7]
Drug abuser	4	[1.7 – 8.9]
Sentence > 2 y	3.1	[1.1 – 8.4]
Indoor sport	2.7	[1.1 – 6.3]
Reported tolerated temperature	2.5	[1.0 – 5.9]
School activities	2.5	[1.0 – 6.0]

Factors associated with physical violence (sustained or perpetrated)



Sustained Violence

	OR	95 CI
Suicide attempt	5	[2.1 – 11.1]
Separated or divorced	3	[1.2 – 7.3]
Anxious / depressed	2.7	[1.3 – 5.4]
Perpetrators	2.3	[1.0 – 5.3]
Sleep disorders	2	[1.1 – 3.7]
Indoor sport	1.8	[1.0 – 3.2]
More than two friends	0.5	[0.2 – 0.9]

Factors not associated with physical violences

- Charge
- Leaving not alone in the cell
- Number of children
- Education
- Physical characteristics (weight, height, muscles)
- Antisocial personality
- Hyperactivity,
- Living conditions (parlors, hygiene, lack of privacy, noise ...)

DISCUSSION

Discussion

- Interview conducted in only one type of prison with :
 - Inmates awaiting for trial (all kind of charges)
 - Inmates sentenced to less than one year
 - Prisoners serving long sentences but in their last year
- Good consistency between the prisoner's reports and the prison administration data (ground for incarceration, length of imprisonment, disciplinary penalties, ...)
- Being charged of sexual assault is not associated with perpetrated or sustained violence, due to preventative measures to separate them from other inmates.

Discussion

- Inmates with depressive and anxiety disorders, sleep disorders, with history of suicide attempts, separated or divorced and those who are engaged in violent behaviors, are more likely to be a **violence victim** and deserve attention.
- Youngest inmate (under 25), drug users and those sentenced to more than two years, should be particularly watched, as **potential perpetrator**.
- Social support (friends within the prison) is protective

