

PhD candidate: Tytus Koweszko, MA in Psychology

Dissertation supervisor: Professor Agata Szulc, MD, PhD

## Summary

**THE TITLE OF DOCTORAL DISSERTATION:** Epidemiology and determinants of suicidal behaviors in patients hospitalized psychiatrically.

**INTRODUCTION:** Suicide behaviors are one of the crucial challenges for contemporary psychiatry. The inpatient population has its own specificity of self-destruction, different than the one in general population. The goal of this doctoral dissertation is the analysis of suicide behaviors frequency, identification of varied risk clinical and non-medical determinants and predictors of suicide behaviors and evaluation of the clinical usability of the Verbal Suicide Scale (VSS) in psychiatric inpatients suicide risk assessment. The method is an authorial diagnostic tool evaluating an attitude toward suicide.

**METHOD:** This doctoral dissertation consists of the series of articles including the review article, epidemiological analysis (N=452), two retrospective study reports (N=60, N=154) and two articles describing the VSS construction and validation process (N=121, N=157). The following diagnostic tools were used in the research: general-descriptive questionnaire, BPRS, ACL, C-SSRS, NGASR, SOC-29, WHOQOL-BREF, VSS, SBQ-R and CSASS.

**RESULTS:** The epidemiological analysis unveiled that patients diagnosed with F10-F19 (ICD-10) made 30% of all study population and of which 66% had suicide related behaviors before or during the hospital admission. Further research showed that low quality of life is substantially related with suicide behaviors, however this factor should be considered with patients gender taken into the account and the moment of life it refers to. The anticipated life satisfaction in future was negatively correlated with the threat of suicide for women (Spearman's  $\rho = -0,542$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ) and past life satisfaction was negatively correlated with suicide risk for men (Spearman's  $\rho = -0,638$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ). In women only the psychological domain was sufficient, while in men also the somatic one. The achieved results allowed to identify suicide risk and protective factors which were different for each gender. This data let to create a psychological portrait of potential female- and male-suicide. In the VSS

construction and validation process the Varimax factor analysis validated the three factor structure. Cronbach's alpha reliability for each factor was satisfactory: 0.881 for suffering avoidance scale, 0.772 for internalized aggression scale and 0.723 for hopelessness scale. In terms of VSS validity the group of patients with the diagnosis of F10-F19 attracts most attention. In this group the tool shows the highest diagnostic suicide risk validity.

**CONCLUSIONS:** The in-patients with F10-F19 diagnosis shows the strongest suicide inclinations. The non-medical factors are as much significant as psychopathological ones. The important suicide risk determinant which impacts the choice of therapeutic intervention is gender of a patient. Moreover in the suicide risk assessment the clinicians should take into consideration the present situation and the life history of the patient, because in the suicide risk assessment these information might be more important than directly expressed suicide declarations. The achieved data confirms the validity of the VSS in terms of diagnosing risk factors related to volitional stage of suicide. The clinical use of the method supports the clinicians in defining the affect typology which is helpful in the therapeutic process.