

Boyle, D.J. and Hassett-Walker, C. (2008) "Individual-Level and Socio-Structural Characteristics of Violence: An Emergency Department Study." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 23(8), 1011-1026

Abstract

Statement of the Problem. The present study developed out of a growing awareness that multiple sources of data are needed to get a fuller understanding of the extent and causes of assault-related injuries. We developed a data collection system to provide information about assault-related injuries within Newark, New Jersey. Assault-related injury was defined as bodily harm resulting from intentional violence-related causes, but not including self-injury.

Methods. Emergency Department (ED) staff at the six hospitals providing emergency medical care within Newark collected data on all assault-related ED visits during four, one-month periods (one month per season, i.e., February, April, August, October) during 2001. Individual (n=1,204) and neighborhood-level (n=262) analyses were conducted using SPSS software 14.0 for Windows; the latter employed data from the 2000 U.S. Census. A hotspots map was also generated using Arcview Spatial Analyst 9.1 geographical mapping software, and CrimeStat software.

Results. At the individual level, the implications for IPV research are that one in three ED patients treated for an intentional assault was harmed by an intimate partner or other family member. As hypothesized based on social disorganization theory, hierarchical regression analyses revealed that poorer neighborhoods with more vacant housing units had significantly higher rates of assault-related injuries.