


# ASSESSMENT OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE WITHIN HETEROSEXUAL INTIMATE PARTNERS IN MURES COUNTY

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# Introduction

- Rape and sexual harassment within heterosexual partners (married or not)
- East European Institute for Reproductive Health  Management Informational System – Domestic violence

# Main issues

- Sexual violence, a type of violence against women: definition, importance, local context
- Hypothesis and goal of the project
- Outcome
- Objectives and target group
- Methodology

# Sexual violence: definition, importance, local context

- “Violence against women” means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life (*Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, Article 1*)

# Sexual violence: definition, importance

- Domestic violence, a frequent type of violence against women, is a Public Health issue
- Domestic violence: physical, psychological, sexual or economical
- Sexual violence: rape and sexual harassment

# Sexual violence: importance

South Carolina, USA: had experienced physical, sexual or psychological intimate partner violence during their lifetime:

- 22.9% of 7122 men
- 28.9% of 6790 women:
  - ◆ RR = 2.2 to experience physical or sexual violence
  - ◆ RR = 1.1 to experience abuse of power and control, but
  - ◆ RR = 0.8 to report verbal abuse alone

# Sexual violence: importance

Texas, USA: **68%** of psychically abused women reported sexual assault

- **15%** attributed 1/more STD to sexual assault
- **20%** rape-related pregnancy

Risk of sexual reassault decreased by:

- **59%** for women who contacted the police
- **70%** for women who applied for a protection order after the first sexual assault
- **32%** for women who received medical care

# Sexual violence: importance

- Used quantitative methods to determine the prevalence and risk factors of sexual violence
- Methods:
  - ◆ Self administered questionnaires
  - ◆ Questionnaires using interviewers
  - ◆ Mail questionnaire survey
  - ◆ Telephone survey
- Are collected data relevant to the real situation?



# Sexual violence: local context

## ■ Romania:

- ◆ Laws: are not very specific, can be manipulated
- ◆ **No** educational system against sexual violence
- ◆ **No** study on sexual violence

## ■ East European Institute for Reproductive Health:

Year 2004 → **164** new cases of domestic violence:

- ★ **86%** women and **14%** men
- ★ Age: 15 – 82 years, most of them: **26 - 35** years
- ★ Relationship with aggressor: marriage in **54%** (89 cases), consensual union in **13%** (21 cases)

# Sexual violence: hypothesis, goal and outcome of the project

- Hypothesis: domestic violence involves unwanted sexual experience
- Goal: To assess the possible factors associated with sexual violence against women in Mures County who are involved in an intimate heterosexual relationship with violent partners
- Outcome: policy makers will change the laws and develop educational programmes

# Objectives and target group

## ■ Objectives:

- ◆ To find factors associated with sexual violence
- ◆ To evaluate: domestic violence, gender, childhood and sexuality issues; possible children involved
- ◆ To see if unwanted sexual experience is present
- ◆ To see what they perceive as unwanted sexual experience

## ■ Target group = women:

- ◆ domestic violence victims
- ◆ came more than once for psychological/juridical support
- ◆ **20 - 40** years old
- ◆ similar condition

# Sexual violence: methodology

- Sensitive issue → Qualitative study
- In-depth, semi-structured, audiotaped interviews
- Coding analysis
- Ethical issues:
  - ◆ Voluntary
  - ◆ Informed consent
  - ◆ Can withdraw or avoid answers
  - ◆ If needed psychological, juridical and medical support
  - ◆ Further support and shelter



Thank you!