Gun Violence: A Public Health Crisis

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Research based on public health crises discovered how contextual and circumstantial factors shape behaviors of societies and communities with reference to gun violence. Young men are inexplicably characterized by both perpetrators and victims of viciousness. There is sufficient global research that proposes the accessibility of guns up surging the risk of deadly violence. Once weapons are present, there is an increased probability of suicide attempts to thrive. Poor people are the most pretentious populations drawing attention to the socioeconomic causes of gun violence. Various research studies have indicated that hoarding guns and the captivation of guns is a sign of rebellious behavior. The highest proportion of violence is pragmatic in young individuals, aged 15 to 34 years (Kenneth et al., 2019). Injuries and fatalities, because of guns, pistols, rifles or other weapons are all categorized in gun violence (Bauchner et al., 2017). Thousands of people die every day across the world because of misuse or accidental use of firearms. The purpose of this research is to analyze the association between poverty and social determinants of health with gun violence and to scrutinize the methods and the role of public health specialists and nurses to decrease the upsurge in the rate of gun violence among communities.

# Epidemiological statistics

National Vital Statistical accounts that deaths in 2017 due to firearm were 39,773, suicides 23,854 and due to homicide, 14,542 deaths were reported (Kenneth et al., 2019). It has been documented that 36,252 deaths in the United States were reported in the year 2016 (Fredrick, 2019). Every year 214,000 deaths are caused by firearms with the highest numbers reported in countries not at war. About 40% of homicides are caused by guns (Cukier & Eagen, 2018). Half of the suicides have been committed using guns. The age-adjusted mortality rates for weapon-related injuries increased from 11.8% to 12.0% in the year 2017. The highest rate of violence is observed in young individuals, aged 15 to 34 years (Kenneth et al., 2019). The United States is considered a developed country but the proportions of gun violence and homicides are reported to be 25 times higher than the other countries. It was observed that 60.7% of the gun related deaths in 2015 in the United States were suicides. The way a person used to attempt suicide is very significant to discuss. By using pills or drugs, over 90% chances are to survive, but with the use of a gun, there would be no other chance to live (Bauchner et al., 2017). Data from hospitals and emergencies has suggested that deaths and damage due to the use of a gun is a public health issue.

# Statistics Related to Poverty

The foremost contributing factors to the higher rates of gun violence are the low socio-economic status. There is a direct link between the socioeconomic status of an individual with shaping and influencing their behaviors (Artiga & Hinton, 2019). Poverty and low socioeconomic status have been found to endorse unemployment and the ultimate outcome in the rise of violence. This is because of the non-availability of finances, lack of resources, illiteracy and lack of basic life facilities in low socio-economic status. The limited access to such facilities causes stress in communities and societies. This led to the development and adoption of aggressive behaviors and violence to achieve success. Hence, decreasing the number of violence related to guns increase community success in education and employment. Additionally, suicides and homicides rates were significantly higher in poor areas having limited access to basic life facilities (Bauchner et al., 2017). Evidence has collected, though, indicating to socioeconomic aspects such as income, prosperity, and education as the essential sources of a varied range of psychological behaviors.

Research has recommended a link between the socioeconomic status of the individual in shaping and influencing their behaviors. The studies have observed the underlying causes of gun violence based on epidemiological statistics. Also, various studies have analyzed the link between poverty and other social determinants of health with violence. Moreover, it has also been scrutinized that the preventive methods and the role of the nursing profession can effectively decrease the upsurge rate of gun violence among communities. Social disparity and income discrimination are also stimulating gun violence behaviors among communities. An association exists between the increasing proportion of guns and gun possession and an increase in the number of murders, suicides, and damages.

Discrimination and health disparities are the other important elements to measure the economic wellbeing of an individual and it has a strong correlation between homicide, suicide, and gun violence. The countries with decreased health disparities had the lowest gun violence. The number of gun ownerships is about 300 million and is rapidly rising in the United States. The number of deaths due to firearms is increasing with the rise in possession of guns (Bauchner et al., 2017). Most of these mortalities happen in economically backward societies with a higher number of people living below the poverty line. The affected populations facing health inequality have higher risks of death rates related to guns. The studies have found the relationship between suicide and socio-economic variables, like poverty, indebtedness, financial crisis, and unemployment is available. The determinants of health inequalities include natural biological variances, selected health-hazardous behaviors, and health-damaging approaches. When the choice of lifestyle is brutally limited, exposure to stressful, risky, and unhealthy working conditions would ultimately force an individual to adapt psychologically impaired behaviors such as violence and viciousness. These young individuals will use power, force, and aggression to achieve success.

The studies have revealed a strong correlation between poverty and the social determinants of health. All the social determinants of health like financial status, income, living conditions determine the poverty level of an individual. Those having a good job, earning a good income and possessing adequate life facilities are regarded as middle class. Below this, counts as deprived lacking the access to basic life facilities and decreased or no access to health facilities, such conditions and circumstances lead to individuals and societies at risk to acquire impaired behaviors including gun violence and abuse.

# Prevention and Opportunities for Action

Part of the occasion and accountability to stop youth violence comprises stimulating, assimilating, and employing public health specialists and public health nurses. They have the proficiency and abilities to establish societies’ energies to preclude youth violence. Nurses and p public health professionals can associate and supplement the work of new sectors, counting law execution, education, community facilities, and medical organizations to reinforce prevention activities (Miles & Scott, 2019). By utilizing the faith-linked organizations, and social media public health can subsidize and help the youth to acquire healthy behaviors (Fredrick, 2019). Public inhabitants and frontrunners; public health experts; parents, instructors and others who work with youth can help in preventive methodologies. They all have a significant role that can prevent the youth to engage in violence and aggressive activities.

Governmental entities need to provide and establish employment sources as many as they can to engage youth in working. The studies have suggested the key to reducing growth rates of gun violence and it has been found that gun violence is preventable. Since the highest percentage of gun violence occurs in youth with ages fifteen to thirty-four, prevention seems to be the most effective method (Bauchner et al., 2017). A variety of methods have been suggested by the researchers that are effective in delving out gun violence (Santaella-Tenorio, Cerdá, Villaveces, & Galea, 2016). Implementation of strict gun laws has long been debated to reduce the number of suicides, homicides, murders and other types of violence. A systematic review of 130 research studies published from 1950 to 2014 from ten different countries studied the implementation and effectiveness of different types of gun laws. Multi-disciplinary approaches and multiple laws can target different components of firearm regulation helped to reduce the related mortalities in the countries (Santaella-Tenorio et al., 2016). Nurses must arise as frontrunners in order to form cooperative partnerships with indigenous and government stakeholders. This may need the nurse to teach community leaders and associates on desirable policy modifications in order to establish novel programs to help and defend vulnerable people to meet the challenges (Tluczek et al., 2019).

Various countries including various States in the United States have implemented multiple strategies to reduce firearm-related mortalities by executing strict rules for gun licensure. Additionally, restriction policies and taxes on the purchase, access, and use of weapons have been associated with a decrease in several weapon-related deaths. However, the differences in settings of studies combined limit the credibility of this study’s findings. Some other preventive measures include background checks and child anticipatory laws. Both have been directly linked to a lower rate of firearm deaths. Furthermore, safe manufacturing and taxation on firearms will help to reduce purchase, use and related damages (Artiga & Hinton, 2019). All the healthcare experts particularly nurses and public health practitioners working in community health services, emergency care, and trauma care have some moral obligations related to violence, injuries, firearms, mortalities (Tluczek et al., 2019). We all can play an important role in applied programs, policy recommendations and awareness campaigns as we are well aware of the policies, principles and reasons for health disparities (Rowhani-Rahbar, Simonetti, & Rivara, 2016). After recovery from physical injuries, it has observed that some patients develop psychological disorders and a nurse can play a crucial role in diagnosis, treatment and post-treatment management of the disease. However, witnessing a gun crime leads to severe outcomes sometimes, but it is the moral duty of all healthcare professionals to be just and fair in legitimacies.

# Conclusion

The assessment discovers how contextual and circumstantial factors shape behaviors of societies and communities with deference to gun violence. Evidence has evaluated, though, indicating to socioeconomic aspects such as income, prosperity, and education as an indispensable source of a varied range of psychological behaviors. There is a strong correlation between socioeconomic status of societies and communities in shaping and influencing their behaviors. The statistics and the influence of low socioeconomic status and poverty have suggested that effective management and proficient skills are required to drop the upsurge proportions of gun violence among communities. Nurses can play a significant role in reducing the health disparities among communities because of their knowledge concerning principles and policies of social justice. The nurses and public health professionals are required to establish educational awareness programs to facilitate communities in acquiring healthy behaviors (Tucker, Gallagher-Ford, Baker, & Vottero, 2019). Government and state-level policymakers should implement constructive and productive strategies and programs community levels to facilitate a larger number of young populations in employment. Also, government entities should execute and implement strict laws and policies to reduce gun violence in communities.

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