MONITORING DRUG-RELATED HOMICIDE

Expanding the EHM: Data protocol

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1   Monitoring DRH using the European Homicide Monitor

This coding manual serves as a guideline when re-assessing homicide cases. The current EHM framework does not cover the full spectrum of Goldstein's tripartite framework. By adding additional drug-related variables and further developing the EHM, this lacuna can be filled. The main objectives are to (1) assess whether the homicide case was drug-related, and (2) identify the specific relationship between drugs and the homicide according to Goldstein's tripartite framework (Goldstein, 1985). Furthermore, due to the overall richness of homicide data within the EHM, each case may be linked to specific characteristics of the incident, victim and perpetrator of drug-related homicide (3).

In its current form, there are three drug-related variables present in the EHM's data set (see Table 1). Of these three variables, the indication whether or not the perpetrator and/or victim had taken any drugs at the time of the crime directly relates to Goldstein's mechanism of psychopharmacological violence. The second drug-related variable – whether the individual is known to be a drug addict – does not directly constitute any of Goldstein's types of drug-related violence. Still, it might serve as an indicator that the homicide was drug-related.

Table 1: Drug variables in the EHM

Variable name	Explanation	Level	Coding
DRUG	Had the individual taken drugs at the time of the crime?	Victim/ Perpetrator	0 = No, nothing in the case indicates this; 1 = Yes, some indications exist; 2 = Yes, there are sure indications; 999 = Unknown
DRUGADD	Individual drug dependent (a drug addict)	Victim/ Perpetrator	0 = No, nothing in the case indicates this; 1 = Yes, some indications exist; 2 = Yes, there are sure indications; 999 = Unknown
PREDRUG	Perpetrator previously convicted for drug crime	Perpetrator	0 = No; 1 = Yes; 999 = Unknown

Furthermore, there is an additional variable on the type of homicide which includes – among others – cases of systemic and economic-compulsive violence. However, given the granularity of this data, specific information on these two types of drug-related homicide cannot be extracted from this variable, as the two are part of respectively the broader 'criminal milieu' and 'robbery killing' categories (Table 2).

Table 2: Types of homicide in the EHM

Variable name	Explanation	Level	Coding
TYPEHOM	How can the homicide be described in reference to relationship, motive and situation between the	Incident	1 = Partner killing; 2 = Child killing within family; 3 = Infanticide; 4 = Other familial killing; 5 = Criminal milieu (rip deals, narcotics affairs etc.); 6 = Robbery killing: commercial; business (shop, bank, taxi etc.); 7 = Robbery killing: private home; 8 = Robbery

perpetrator and victim		killing: street robbery; (civilian victim); 9 = Nightlife violence; 10 = Killing by mentally disturbed; person (Non-family); 11 = Other in non-criminal milieu; 12 = Killing by children, not family-related; 13 = Child killed by adult, not family-related; 14 = Sexual; 15 = Other; 999 = Unknown

Furthermore, to explore the nature of drug-related homicide in more detail each case may be linked to specific characteristics of the incident, victim and perpetrator that are present in the EHM. Homicide *incident* characteristics, for example, include the homicide location ("public" reflecting public locations such as parks, forests, recreational areas, shops, restaurants, bars, streets, public transportation, workplace, a hotel/motel, dormitory or car); "private" including the private home of either the victim or perpetrator) and the modus operandi (includes firearms, blunt instruments, sharp instruments, strangulation, hitting/kicking or "other" modus operandi, such as dying of poisoning, explosives, drowning, or motor vehicle-related injuries). If multiple modi are used, we chose the most violent method according to the EHM-manual (Appendix). The type of homicide reflects a combination of the relationship between victim and perpetrator and motive and roughly consists of domestic homicide (intimate partner homicide, child homicide and other family homicide), homicide in the criminal milieu, robbery, and non-felony related homicides (nightlife violence, nondomestic homicides by the mentally ill, sexual homicides and other homicides. If partial overlap between categories occurred, the incident was first defined by the relationship between victim and perpetrator (intimate partner homicide, child homicide and other family homicide), and second, by the main motive of the homicide. Homicide *victim* and *perpetrator* characteristics include gender, age, ethnicity (defined by country of birth of the individual and his/her parents) and drug use.

Moreover, cases may be linked to other variables in the manual, such as previous sentencing for violent crimes, information on prosecution and sanctions, to name a few. For the content and coding instructions of all EHM variables, we refer to EHM manual set out in report of Granath and colleagues (2011), and also added as an appendix to this coding protocol.

2. Additional variables on drug-related homicide

Coding of additional DRH variables

To further include drug-related homicide in data collection, several additional variables on the individual and incident level were formulated. On the more general level, this includes an overview of the three typologies coined by Goldstein (1985;Table 3).

Table 3: General drug-related variables

Variable name	Explanation	Level	Coding
HOMDRUG	Was the homicide drug-related?	Incident	0 = No; 1 = Yes: psychopharmacological; 2 = Yes: economic-compulsive; 3 = Yes: systemic; 999 = Unknown
HOM_DRUGS_PHAR	Does this category apply?	Incident	0 = No; 1= Yes; 999 Unknown
HOM_DRUGS_EC	Does this category apply?	Incident	0 = No; 1= Yes; 999 Unknown
HOM_DRUGS_SYST	Does this category apply?	Incident	0 = No; 1= Yes; 999 Unknown

For each of these three mechanisms of drug-related violence, additional variables are formulated to increase our understanding of DRH. In terms of psychopharmacological homicide, perhaps the most important variable (i.e. whether the involved parties had taken drugs at the time of the crime) is already part of the EHM framework. HOMDRUG is seen as a more general assessment, whilst HOM_DRUGS_PHAR; HOM_DRUGS_EC; and HOM_DRUGS_SYS account for overlap, as they are not mutually exclusive.

As for psychopharmacological homicide, additional relevant insights can be gained by focusing on the type of drugs used, the amount of drug used, and the legality of these drugs (Table 4).

Table 4: Variables related to psychopharmacological homicide

Variable name	Explanation	Level	Coding
DRUGTYPE	What type of drug had the individual taken at the time of the crime?	Victim/ Perpetrator	0 = Cannabis; 1 = Cocaine; 2 = Opiates; Ecstasy; 3 = Amphetamine; 4 = GHB; 5 = Sedatives and tranquilizers; 6 = Other; 999 = Unknown
HOMDOS	What amount of drug had the individual taken?	Victim/ Perpetrator	0 = Less than one dose; 1 = One dose; 2 = Two doses; 3 = Three doses; 4 = Four doses; 5 = Five doses; 6 = More than five doses; 999 = Unknown
DRUGLEG	Did the individual take legal or illegal drugs at the time of the crime?	Victim/ Perpetrator	0 = Legal; 1 = Illegal/Illicit; 999 = Unknown

Whether a homicide constituted a robbery killing can be derived from the TYPEHOM variable (Table 2). In order to determine whether cases of robbery killings constitute economic-compulsive violence, it

should be determined what the perpetrator (intended to) steal. Additional relevant information can be gathered when collecting data on the type of drugs the perpetrator obtained or tried to obtain by committing the homicide. This allows to collect empirical data on the notion that economic-compulsive violence especially seems to occur in cases of addiction to more expensive drugs typified by compulsive patterns of use, such as cocaine and heroin (Goldstein, 1985).

Table 5: Variables related to economic-compulsive homicide

Variable name	Explanation	Level	Coding
ROBKILLTYPE	If a robbery killing: What did the perpetrator (intended to) steal?	Incident	*0 = Money (to buy drugs)*; 1 = Money (other purpose or purpose unknown); *2 = Goods (to exchange/sell for drugs)*; 3 = Goods (other purpose or purpose unknown); *4 = Drugs (to foresee in one's costly drug use)*; 5 = Other; 999 = Unknown [Note: Bold = economic-compulsive violence]
ECOCOMDRUG	If economic-compulsive: What did the perpetrator (intended to) obtain?	Incident	0 = Cannabis; 1 = Cocaine; 2 = Opiates; Ecstasy; 3 = Amphetamine; 4 = GHB; 5 = Sedatives and tranquilizers; 6 = Other drugs; 7 = Money (to buy drugs); 8 = Goods (to exchange/sell for drugs); 999 = Unknown

Finally, systemic violence occurs within the broader criminal milieu. The number of homicides related to the criminal milieu can be derived from the TYPEHOM variable (Table 2). To increase the granularity of the available data, more in-depth information should be collected on these homicides. This allows for the distinction between which homicides are cases of systemic violence and which are not. Finally, it is interesting to zero-in on the victim-perpetrator relationship. In itself, this does not necessarily provide the insights to clearly determine whether a homicide is a case of systemic violence or not (e.g. a drug user killing another drug user might or might not be systemic violence), although some cases (e.g. a drug dealer killing another drug dealer) are likely to be the result of aggressive patterns of interaction within drug markets (and hence systemic violence). Therefore, the variable has the potential to serve as an indicator for systemic violence. Furthermore, when viewed in conjunction to the above discussed variable (CRIMMILTYPE), it can serve to identify the relationship between the victim and perpetrator in cases flagged as systemic homicide.

Table 6: Variables related to systemic homicide

Variable name	Explanation	Level	Coding
CRIMMILTYPE	If occurred in the criminal milieu: How can the homicide be described?	Incident	0 = Rip deal (not drug-related*); 1 = Rip deal (drug-related)*; 2 = Turf war (not drug-related or unknown); 3 = *Turf war (drug-related)*; 4 = Retaliation/revenge (not drug-related or unknown); *5 = Retaliation/revenge (drug-related)*; 6 = Other feud (not drug-related or unknown); *7= Other feud (drug-related)*; 999 = Unknown [Note: Bold = systemic violence]

VICOFFREL	The victim is the … of the perpetrator	Victim	0 = Parent; 1 = Child, 2 = Brother/sister; 3 = (Ex-)husband/wife; 4 = Other family; 5 = Lover; 6 = Friend or acquaintance; 7 = Employer, employee or colleague; 8 = Neighbor; *9 = Drug customer*; *10 = Drug dealer*; *11 = Fellow drug user*; *12 = Fellow drug dealer;* 13 = Customer (no drugs); 14 = Patient; 15 = Doctor or other medical profession; 16 = Roommate (not family); 17 = Tenant or landlord; 18 = Student; 19 = Teacher; *20 = Other (drug- related)*; 21 Other (not drug-related); 999 = Unknown [Note: Bold = (potential indicator for) systemic violence]

2a. Additional coding instructions

Homicide is considered *drug-related* when (1) the homicide has occurred while either the perpetrator, the victim or both were evidently under the influence of drugs; (2) the homicide is motivated by a need to obtain drugs or money to buy drugs or (3) the homicide is related to the ecology of the drug market. In this context, drugs are defined as opiates (heroin, morphine, etc.), stimulants (cocaine, amphetamine, etc.), hallucinogens (LSD, tryptamines, etc.) and legally prescribed drugs used in excess (i.e. more than prescribed). The definition of DRH *excludes* violence related to intoxication by alcohol. We use the term *related* loosely, not implying causation but merely pertaining to the involvement of drugs in the homicide.

When re-assessing cases an understanding of the case can be established by gathering different sources, such as media/newspapers, police data (online) court verdict or paper files at various judicial institutions. The sources are considered to differ in value. Paper files have been considered to have the most value, followed by court-verdicts, police sources and then internet/media sources last (least valuable). Information in a 'higher quality' source therefore overrules information derived from 'lower quality' sources. If weaker sources are indicative of drug-involvement/relation it may be important to flag the cases. It has been left up to the discretion of the scorer to judge the balance between evidence at hand and whether it can be classed under a certain category.

Psychopharmacological violence [HOM_drugs_Phar]
To identify data sources of psychopharmacological violence, data are considered that reflect perpetrators and victims who were known drug users, as well as perpetrators and victims who were under the influence of drugs at the time of the homicide. Critical sources here were court verdicts as they mention intoxication. When classing psychopharmacological, we are not implying causation but that the case/individual can be classed under that category. For example a victim who had been a known drug user would be scored has having a psychopharmacological component. However, if (police) reports include blood tests revealing drug use of either victim or perpetrator this is considered strong evidence.

The more detailed variables on the amount of drugs, type of drugs and legality of the drug used could be scored from different sources. However, definition and level of analysis of these variables may be different per country. For instance, information on 'dose' may be found in paper files, but police sources such as blood tests taken during police-investigation may include other units of measurement rather than 'dose'. Also, whether drugs (like cannabis for example is legal or illegal) can be different per country. Cross-national comparisons may be hampered for this reason.

Economic-compulsive violence [HOM_drugs_EC]

To determine an indirect relation (i.e. economic-compulsive violence), it is required to identify an perpetrator as well as information on the motive for the homicide. Key here is data on motive and intent.

Systemic violence [HOM_drugs_Syst]

Finally, in the case of systemic violence, data is collected that is either defined as systemic violence, or that provides insight into the perpetrator-victim relationship. Strong indicators for a homicide being related to the drug market include for example, drive-bys assassinations and other trademark signs of systemic violence like the involvement of drug-gangs . For example a perpetrator trying to steal drugs and money (rip deal) would be classed as systemic (not economic) unless indications to intent/motive.

References

Goldstein, P. (1985). The Drugs/Violence Nexus: A Tripartite Conceptual Framework. *Journal of Drug Issues*, 15(4), 493–506.

Granath, S., Hagstedt, H., Kivivuori, J., Lehti, M., Ganpat, S., Liem, M., Nieuwbeerta, P. (2011). *Homicide in Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden A first Study on the European Homicide Monitor Data.* Stockholm: Brå: The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention.