

## Self-Harming Behaviour and Its Comorbidities

Slavka Demuthova<sup>1</sup>, Andrej Demuth<sup>2</sup>

*<sup>1</sup>University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovakia, <sup>2</sup>Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia*

### ABSTRACT

The study provides an overview of the frequency and structure of comorbid mental disorders among individuals who engage in self-harm, with additional consideration of gender differences and age-related associations. Data were collected from psychologists and psychiatrists reporting on 135 cases of self-harming clients in Slovakia (age: 12-55 years;  $M = 18.57$ ;  $SD = 6.975$ ; 85.2% women). Comorbidities were assessed according to DSM-5 categories, supplemented by the units Relational Problems (in family), Abuse and Neglect, and Suicidal Behavior Disorder. Results indicate that self-harm is accompanied by a wide spectrum of psychological difficulties, with all monitored diagnoses present in the sample. The most prevalent comorbidities were Relational Problems (in family) (96.2%) and Anxiety Disorders (88%). Age correlated positively with the occurrence of Personality Disorders, Depressive Disorders, Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders, and Abuse and Neglect. Significant gender differences emerged: males more frequently exhibited Neurodevelopmental Disorders, Schizophrenia Spectrum and Other Psychotic Disorders, and Substance-Related and Addictive Disorders, whereas females more often presented with Feeding and Eating Disorders and Relational Problems (in family). Overall, the findings highlight the strong comorbid profile of self-harming individuals and underscore the need for broad, multidimensional assessment in both research and clinical practice.

**Keywords:** self-harm, comorbidities, prevalence, gender, age