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**Predicting perpetrators' violent behaviours during hostage and barricade incidents**

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Since its very beginnings, the study of hostage and barricade incidents has itself been hostage to an intuitive and empirically fragmentary conceptual framework. This has not only limited innovative thought and the development of new ideas, but also handicapped police decision-making. In fact, the predictive abilities of law enforcement personnel managing crisis situations have been impaired by: 1) the absence of a formal, integrated vision of the factors that contribute to the conceptualization of these events; and 2) the current exclusive reliance on the experience, judgment and intuition of practitioners working in the field. This lack of decision-making guidance is particularly problematic in the dynamic context of hostage and barricade incidents, which are characterized by a high risk of violence, high-stakes outcomes, time pressure and limited information.

This study examines 534 hostage and barricade incidents that occurred in Quebec between 1990 and 2004 and were managed by the Sûreté du Québec's specialized intervention structure. Its objective is to present an integrated and formalized vision of the elements underlying current conceptualizations of crisis situations, in order to optimize decision-making. To this end, logistic regression and recursive partitioning models are presented and compared. Twelve distinct individual and situational static factors are used to predict the perpetrator's recourse to autoaggressive behaviours (those directed against oneself) and heteroaggressive behaviours (those directed against others) during this type of incident. Results identify several valuable predictors that are readily observable and promptly assessable at the outset of a crisis situation. The study's main results will be discussed in light of their practical relevance for decision-makers working in the field.