

**Introduction**

Leaving a violent relationship isn't synonymous of ending violence as it's a risky moment for growth in severity and the possibility of starting new violent relations can't be excluded (Martsof, Draucker, Stepehnson, Cook & Heckman, 2012). Neither it is the only way to overcome violence as it can also have an end inside a relationship with changes in the agressor's behavior. However, court mandated interventions have shown fragile or ineffective results when considered large groups (Feder, Wilson & Austin, 2008), what actually highlights the importance of understanding the process of leaving as a part of empowerment field, keeping the caution to not transform it into an obligation nor a revictimization process.

This potential grows when prevention is in perspective, with the focus on dating relationships. One of the characteristics of this kind of relationship is the less social (and frequently individual) expectations concerning it's stability. Therefore, the importance to promote quality in relationships having as targets trajectories of successive relationships – not necessarily an only one - seems to make sense.

**Objective**

Analyze the advances, limitations and gaps on researches published after 2001 about the process of leaving violent relationships and its implications.

**Method**

Table 1. Terms combined to form entrances in the search of articles

Language	Verbs	Nouns	Adjectives	Terms from literature
English	Leave Stay/leave Abandon End	Date Relationship IPV Partner Violence	Violent Agressive	IPV
Portuguese	Abandonar Terminar Sair Deixar	Namoros Relacionamentos Relação Casamento	Violento(as)	Violência por parceiro íntimo
Spanish	Dejar Salir Acabar Romper	Relación Noviazgo Casamiento	Violento(a)	-
French	Laisser Finire	Couple Relation	Violent(e)	-

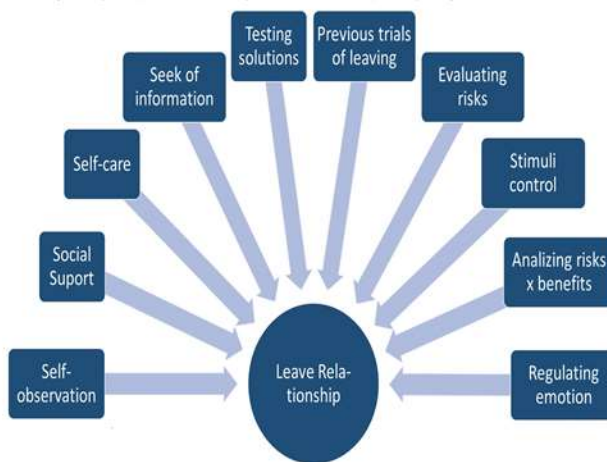
- Search bases: Periódicos Capes and Scielo
- Inclusion Criteria: Treat about the process of leaving or the stay-leave decision.
- Exclusion Criteria: Treat about violence in non-intimate relationships and having been published before 2001<sup>a</sup> (one exception<sup>b</sup>).
- Analysis: Articles were separated by the kind of method: quantitative or qualitative. Categories of analysis were: design, sample, recruitment of sample, procedures, instruments, theoretical frames, kinds of relationships studied, results, independent variables, dependent variables and mediation variables.

**Notes**

a. Previous review (Anderson & Saunders, 2003) analyzed studies published until 2001, that's why this time frame was chosen  
b. One study from 1999 which was not addressed at the previous review (Anderson & Saunders, 2003) was included at this one.

**Qualitative Studies**

Figure 1. Strategies identified on qualitative studies that favored the advance in the process of leaving.



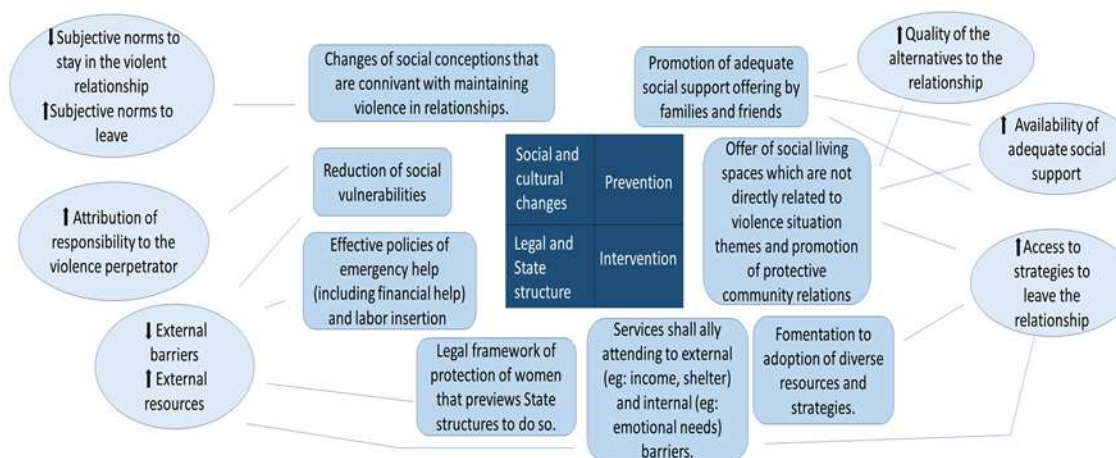
**Results and Discussion<sup>c</sup>**

**Quantitative Studies**

Table 2. Summary of results found in quantitative studies included in the review

<b>Correlated</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subjective norms: how the person perceives that meaningful others see their relationship</li> <li>• Commitment to the relationship: subjective evaluation about quality of available alternatives, satisfaction with the relationship and irrecoverable investments.</li> <li>• Attribution of responsibility for the violence to the aggressor.</li> <li>• Structural barriers and structural resources (eg: income, having a home).</li> <li>• Feeling of angry.</li> <li>• Social support web variability.</li> </ul>
<b>Not related</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Characteristics of violence.</li> <li>• Satisfaction with social support</li> </ul>
<b>Inconsistent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attachment styles: patterns on the way one relates concerning how much a person responds with the need to keep the partner close in view of the anxiety about loss and how disposed one is to offer and seek for support.</li> </ul>

**Implications for professional practice and public policies**



**References**

Anderson, D.K. & Saunders, D.G. (2003). Leaving an abusive partner: an empirical review of predictors, the process of leaving and psychological well-being. *Trauma, violence and abuse*. 4(2), 163-191.  
Feder, L., Wilson, D. B. & Austin, S. (2008). Court-mandated interventions for individuals convicted of domestic violence. *Campbell Systematic Reviews*, 12, 1-46.