Ending Violent Relationships: a literature review

Introduction
Leaving a violent relationship isn’t synonymous with ending violence as it’s a risky moment for growth in severity. The possibility of starting new violent relations can’t be ignored (Matsart, Drucker, Sepelack, & Cook, 2012). Neither it is the only way to overcome violence as it can also have an end inside a relationship with changes in the aggressor’s behavior. However, court mandated interventions have shown fragile or ineffective results when considered large groups (Peled, Loland, & Austin, 2008), which 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 or a revitalization process.

This potential group when prevention is in perspective, with the focus on ending relationships. One of the characteristics of this kind of relationship is the less social (and frequently individual) expectations concerning its stability. Therefore, the importance of promoting 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

* Search bases: Periodicos Capes and Science Direct.
* Inclusion Criteria: Treat about the process of leaving or the stay-leave decisions.
* Exclusion Criteria: Treat about violence in non-intimate relationships and having been published before 2001 (one exception).
* Analysis: Articles were separated by the kind of method: quantitative or qualitative. Categories of analysis were: design, samples, recruitment of sample, procedures, instruments, theoretical frames, kinds of relationships studied, results, independent variables, dependent variables and mediation variables.

Table 1: Terms combined as forms entrance in the search of articles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Nouns</th>
<th>Adjectives</th>
<th>Terms from literature</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>Leave</td>
<td>Stay/Run</td>
<td>Abandon</td>
<td>End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>Abandonar</td>
<td>Terminar</td>
<td>Sair</td>
<td>Deixar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Dejar</td>
<td>Salir</td>
<td>Acabar</td>
<td>Romper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>Laser</td>
<td>Parir</td>
<td>couple</td>
<td>Violent(e)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Qualitative Studies

Figure 1: Strategies identified in qualitative studies that典范 the advance in the process of leaving.


Leaving Relationship

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-care</th>
<th>Social Support</th>
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Quantitative Studies

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

- Subjective norms: how the person perceives that meaningful others see their relationship.
- Commitment to the relationship: subjective evaluation about quality of available alternatives, satisfaction with the relationship and subjective investment.
- Attribution of responsibility for the violence to the aggressor.
- Structural barriers and structural resources (e.g., income, having a home).
- Feeling of angry.
- Social support web variability.

Implications for professional practice and public policies

- Change of social construction that are consistent with maintaining violence in relationships.
- Promotion of adequate social support offering by families and friends.
- Reduction of social vulnerabilities.
- Legal framework of protection of women that previously State structures to do so.
- External external barriers.
- External resources.
- Services shall only attending to external (e.g., income, shelter) and internal (e.g., emotional needs) barriers.

References
