There’s an App for That: A Review of Mobile Apps for Violence Prevention & Response

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Background: Smartphones

- 81% of Americans own a smartphone
  - 96% of 18-29 year old Americans own a smartphone
- Global median of smartphone ownership in advanced economies is 76%
  - 45% in emerging economies
Objectives

- Assess the quality of existing violence prevention and response mobile apps.
Search Strategy

Platform:
- Apple App Store
- Google Play

Search terms:
- Violence Prevention
- Sexual Assault
- Domestic Violence
- Intimate Partner Violence
- Sexual Violence
- Forensic Nursing
- Wife Abuse
- Rape
How to search: this is not like the others...

- No Boolean Operators ("AND", "OR")
- Reliance on developer entered key words and the app title
- Kind of a “Black Box”
- App ratings matter
Sample Search: Google Play
Inclusion Criteria

- English
- Free

Be directed to:

- general public at risk for violence
- patients/victims or
- advocacy/providers
Mobile App Rating Scale

- App Classification
- App Quality
  - Engagement
  - Functionality
  - Aesthetics
  - Information
- Subjective Quality
- App-specific: impact on knowledge, attitudes, intention to change, actual change in health problem
Results
iTunes Apple Store (n=1031)

App Titles Screened (n=1031)

Apps Excluded (n=890)
- Duplicates (n=54)
- Non-English (n=66)
- Paid (n=221)
- Unrelated to SA/IPV (n=549)

Apps Included for Abstract Review (n=141)

Apps Excluded (n=83)

Duplicate Apps (same app in iTunes and Google Play) (n=12)

58 Apps Reviewed

Google Play Store for Android (n=1385)

App Titles Screened (n=1385)

Apps Excluded (n=1158)
- Duplicates (n=339)
- Non-English (n=139)
- Paid (n=69)
- Couldn’t relocate (n=47)
- Unrelated to SA/IPV (n=564)

Apps Included for Abstract Review (n=227)

Apps Excluded (n=78)

149 Apps To Be Reviewed

137 Apps To Be Reviewed

Apps Excluded (n=57)
- Couldn’t relocate (n=43)
- Broken/needed login to use (n=14)

84 Apps Reviewed
App Classification: Focus

- Resource Sharing: 64%
- IPV: 29%
- Crisis intervention: 18%
- Relationship conflict/health: 11%
- Sexual assault: 17%
- Peer support: 11%
- Gen. violence risk: 7%
- Behavior change: 6%
- Goal setting: 5%
- Physical health: 3%
- Child abuse: 2%
- Entertainment: 1%
Target Age Group(s)
(not mutually exclusive)

- Children (<12): 2%
- Teens: 10%
- Young Adults: 28%
- Adults: 63%
- General: 25%
App Affiliations

- NGO: 35%
- Government: 28%
- Unknown: 20%
- Commercial: 5%
- University: 10%
- Healthcare: 1%
App Classification: Overview

- >55% passive information/education
- <15% training, skills, safety planning
- <10% location tracking
- <5% assessment, decision making
# MARS: App Quality Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Mean (St. Dev)</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>2.21 (0.50)</td>
<td>1.40-3.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functionality</td>
<td>3.88 (0.80)</td>
<td>1.25-5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetics</td>
<td>3.51 (0.99)</td>
<td>1.33-5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>1.85 (0.73)</td>
<td>1.00-3.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Quality</td>
<td>2.82 (0.61)</td>
<td>1.00-3.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MARS: Subjective Quality

Recommend?

Rating?
App Quality

- 78 apps scored 3.00 or above
- 51% of apps
Government:
DoD Safe Helpline

- Quality 3.84
- Subjective 4.33
- Impact 4.17
Academic: Here for You

- Quality 3.68
- Subjective 4.00
- Impact 3.17
Advocacy: MyPlan

- Quality: 3.11
- Subjective: 3.50
- Impact: 2.50
Implications for practice

- Treat this resource like any other resource you share with a patient
- Don’t send patients on an app store wild goose chase
  - Link them directly to your app of choice
- All apps are not created equal
  - Vet any apps you recommend on an annual basis
- Need more research!
Questions?

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