

# ASSESSMENT OF A PSYCHOTHERAPY PROTOCOL FOR WOMEN WITH A HISTORY OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE: STUDY OF CLINICAL CASES

## EVALUACIÓN DE UN PROTOCOLO DE PSICOTERAPIA PARA MUJERES CON HISTORIA DE VIOLENCIA DE PAREJA: ESTUDIO DE CASOS CLÍNICOS

Mariana Gomes Ferreira Petersen, Julia Carvalho Zamora,  
Isadora Silveira Ligório, Rodrigo Machado Rodrigues,  
Fernanda Barcellos Serralta y Luísa Fernanda Habigzang

### Abstract

Violence against women is a complex phenomenon that negatively impacts mental health (WHO, 2016). This study aimed to assess the process of a psychotherapy protocol for women with a history of intimate partner violence. A clinical case study design was used and the sample consisted of three participants. The process was analyzed using the Working Alliance Inventory (WAI-O) and Psychotherapy Process Q-Set (PQS), which assess therapeutic alliance and the most and least characteristic items of psychotherapy, respectively. The findings demonstrated good therapeutic alliance and good connection between the sessions, indicating that the protocol is correlated with the expected prototype for cognitive-behavioral therapy. Additionally, symptoms declined in all the women treated. The results provide initial evidence of the effectiveness of the intervention.

**Key words:** Violence against women; Evidence-based psychotherapy; Cognitive-behavioral therapy.

### Resumen

La violencia contra las mujeres es un fenómeno complejo que afecta negativamente a la salud mental (OMS, 2016). Este estudio tuvo como objetivo evaluar el proceso de un protocolo de psicoterapia para mujeres con historial de violencia de pareja. Se utilizó un diseño de estudio de caso clínico y la muestra constó de tres participantes. El proceso se analizó utilizando el Inventario de Alianza de Trabajo (WAI-O) y el Proceso de Psicoterapia Q-Set (PQS), que evalúan la alianza terapéutica y los elementos más y menos característicos de la psicoterapia, respectivamente. Los resultados demostraron una buena alianza terapéutica y una buena conexión entre las sesiones, lo que indica que el protocolo está correlacionado con el prototipo esperado para la terapia cognitivo-conductual. Además, los síntomas disminuyeron en todas las mujeres tratadas. Los resultados proporcionan evidencia inicial de la efectividad de la intervención.

**Palabras clave:** Violencia contra la mujer; Psicoterapia basada en la evidencia; Terapia cognitiva conductual.

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### INTRODUCTION

Violence against women is any act of gender-based violence. It is a serious global problem based on gender inequality, independent of social class, race, religion, culture and education level (Carneiro et al., 2017; Correia et al., 2014; WHO, 2013). Violence or abuse that occurs in a domestic setting is

known as domestic violence, whereas violence between partners or former partners falls under intimate partner violence (Carneiro et al., 2017; Deeke, Boing, Oliveira, & Coelho, 2009).

Being the victim of any form of violence can result in negative psychological and physical consequences for women, affecting their family life, careers, academic performance and community/social relationships (Netto, Moura, Queiroz, Tyrell & Bravo, 2014; WHO, 2016). The literature indicates that exposure to violence is associated with the onset and exacerbation of psychological disorders, the most