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DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL  
AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

# The Male Provision Belief Scale – Assessing whether internalized beliefs about men’s roles as providers can harm women

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# Transactional Sex and Women's Risk of HIV

## Adolescent girls and young women remain at disproportionate risk of acquiring HIV

- Adolescent Girls and Young women (AGYW) in sub-Saharan Africa
  - 10% of the population; 25% of new infections
  - In South Africa 1,500 AGYW are infected every week
- Determinants of HIV among AGYW
  - Biological susceptibility
  - Poor access to sexual and reproductive health information and services
  - Gender inequality including :
    - Gender-based violence
    - **Transactional sex (Wamoyi et al, 2016)**



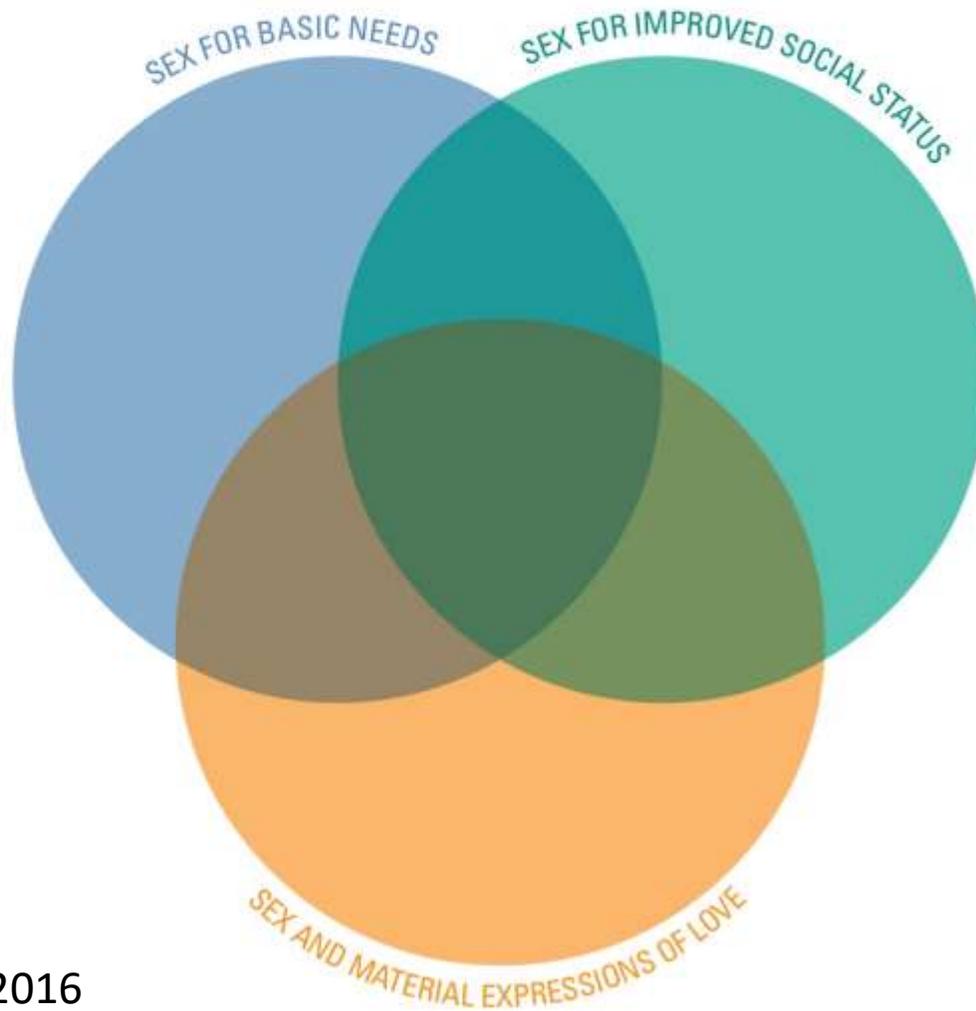
# Defining Transactional Sex

*Transactional sex refers to noncommercial, nonmarital sexual relationships motivated by the implicit assumption that sex will be exchanged for material benefit or status*

*(STRIVE- Stoebenau et al, 2016)*



**Figure 1:** Three factors motivating young women to practice transactional sex



Three overlapping sets of motivations for women's engagement in transactional sex:

1. Basic needs
2. Improved Social status
3. Material expressions of love

All structured by **Gender Inequality**

- Fundamental assumption of heterosexual relationships in patriarchal societies:
- Men Should Provide financial and material support for women, and women are expected to offer sexual and domestic services in return

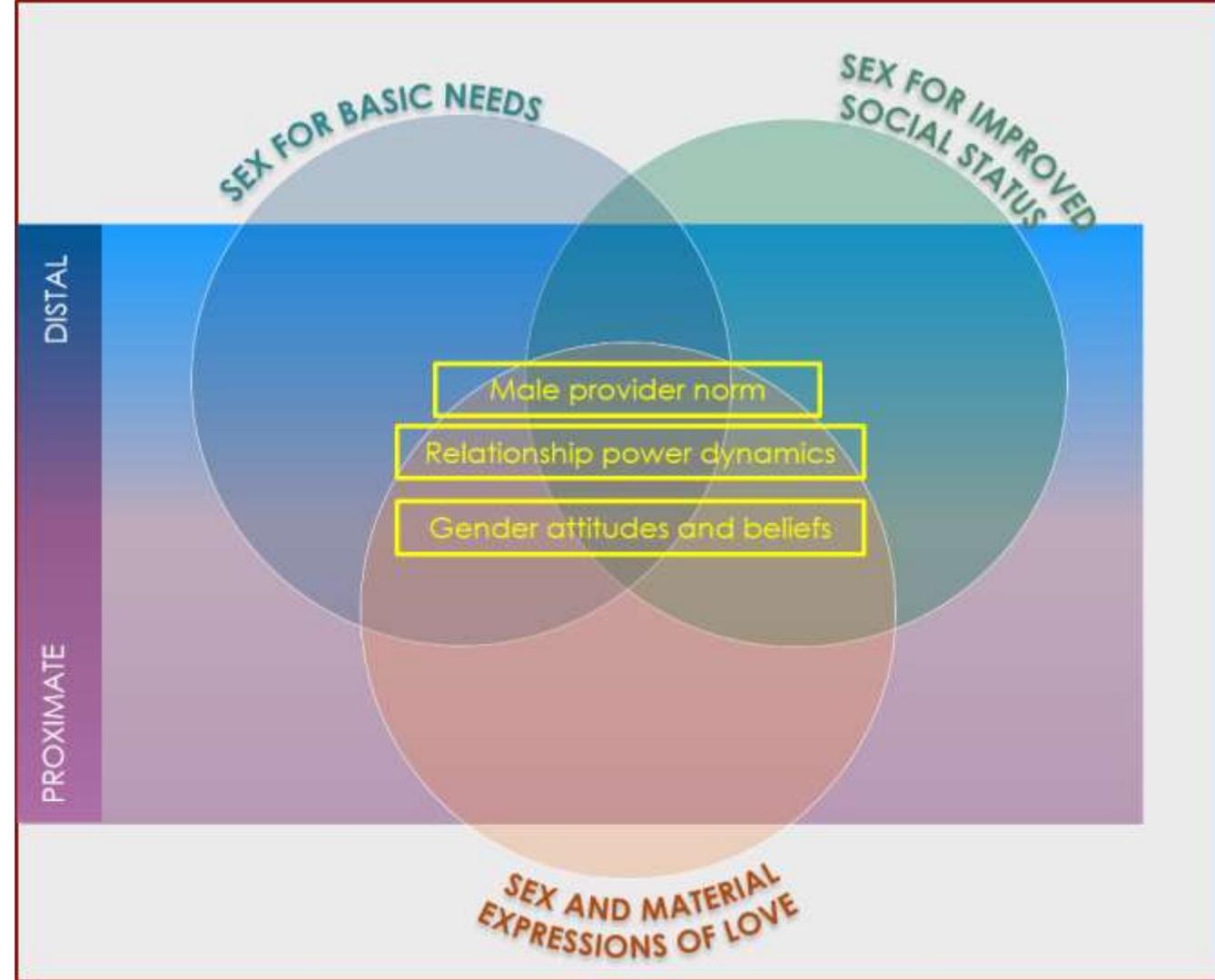
Stoebenau et al, 2016



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# Gender Inequality and Transactional Sex

- We know TS → increased HIV risk for women
- Mechanisms remain unclear
  - VAW/IPV (Cluver, 2013), age-disparate partnerships (cite); frequent exchanges (Kilburn, 2018); agency (Fielding-Miller)
- Limited understanding of gendered social dimensions
  - Existing evidence at relationship level (Dunkle, 2004; Jewkes, 2012; Fielding-Miller, 2017)
  - Gender Norms and Individual beliefs less understood



# Pilot Study Objectives

- We set out to develop measures to assess the gendered social dimensions of women's HIV risk
- Measures explore whether and how fundamental gendered expectations of men's roles as providers are manifested in:
  - Gender Norms (see Stoebenau et al, 2019)
  - Internalized gender beliefs

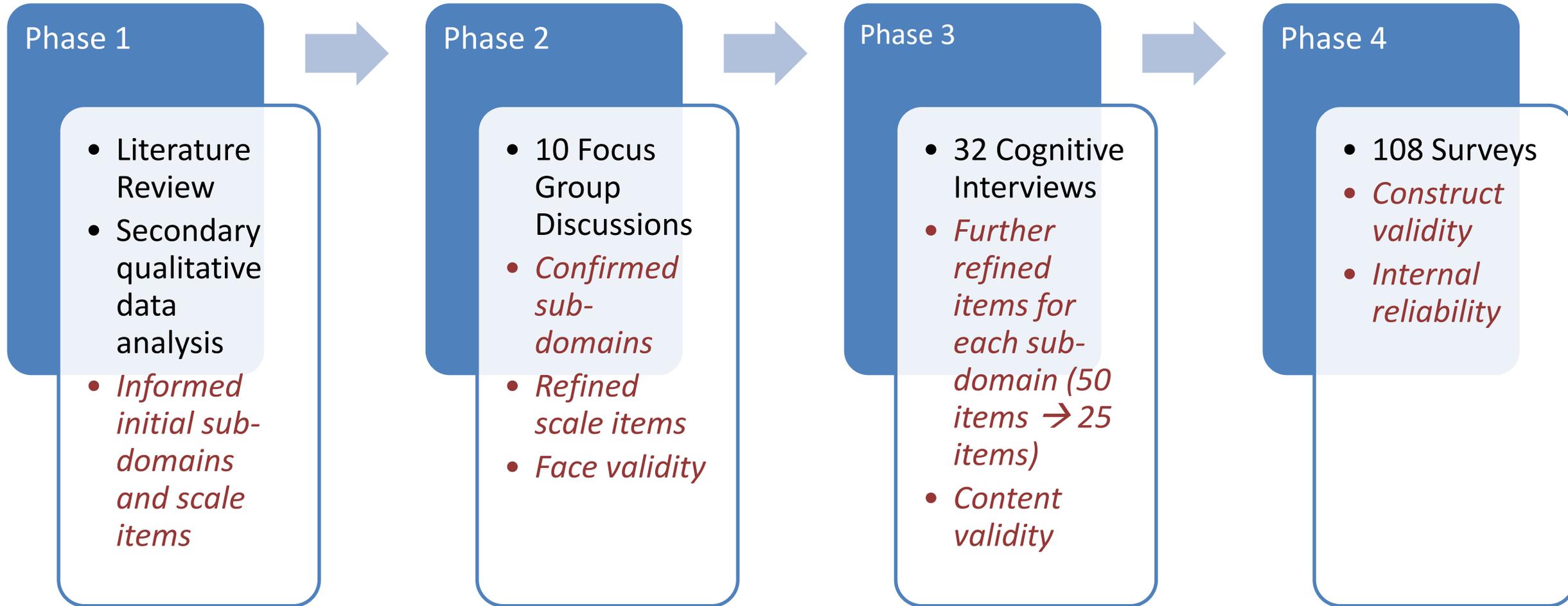


# Research Methods

- Small Pilot Study with Adolescent Girls and Young women in Kampala and Masaka districts, Central Uganda
- Study population: Young women ages 15-24
  - Sampled by: school status, community vs. “high-risk” venue
  - Stratified by district, age
- Data collected in 2017-2018 over four phases with small research team
  - Secondary data analysis, 10 focus-group discussions, 32 cognitive interviews, pilot survey (n=108)



# Scale Development Process across Each Phase of Data Collection



# Phases 1 and 2: Identifying Dimensions attached to expectations of Male Provision

*What male provision expectations “buy men”:*

1. **Male authority** in relationships (Dunkle, 2007)
  1. Legitimizes masculine identity (Morrell, 2012; Dunkle, 2007)
2. Male **control of sexual decision-making** (Jewkes, 2012; Zembe; 2015)

*How women respond to male provision expectations:*

3. **Women’s economic dependence** on men (Stoebenau, 2011)
4. **Women use “erotic power”** to access support from men (Groes-Green, 2012; Wamoyi, 2010; Leclerc-Madlala, 2003)
5. Evidence of **Commitment/Intimacy**: provision=love=sex (Poulin, 2007; Mojola, 2014; Swidler and Watkins, 2007)



# Male Provision Belief Scale Properties

## Scale as Pilot Tested

- 25 item scale, 5 sub-domains of male provision expectations
  - Male relationship authority
  - Male control of sexual decision-making
  - Women's economic dependence
  - Women's sexual agency
  - Male provision and love/commitment
- Response category – 4 point Likert-type scale
  - (Strongly disagree → strongly agree)



# Male Provision Belief Scale Items

- **Male Authority**

- When a man helps his partner to pay for things important to her, it means he should have authority in that relationship

- **Sexual Decision-Making**

- If a man is providing a lot of financial support to his partner, then he should decide whether or not they use a condom during sex.
- If a man is providing financial support for his partner, then she is expected to have sex with him.

- **Economic Dependence**

- Of all the ways a woman can pay for her needs, the best way is to find a man who can help her

- **Sexual Agency**

- As a woman, it's important to know how to use physical beauty to get whatever you want from a man.
- Women are lucky because they can get financial support from men just by having sex with them.

- **Love and Intimacy**

- The more a man helps a woman to pay for things she needs, the more it shows that *he* loves *her*.
- If a man provides very little financial support to his partner, it means he doesn't really love her



# Assessing Scale Reliability and Validity

- Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses – in STATA
  - Assessed correlation matrices for sub-scales and full scale
  - Confirmatory factor analysis to assess construct validity
  - Alpha if item deleted analyses to increase internal reliability
- Results
  - Only “agency” had potential as a separate subscale
  - Economic dependence dropped out (low validity and reliability)
  - Single model prevailed of 17 items across all sub-domains
    - Internal reliability:  $\alpha = .86$ ; factor loadings .43 - .72
    - Predicted scores – higher score = stronger adherence to conventional beliefs



# Bivariate associations with Male Provision Belief Scale

	MPBS	
	Coeff/OR	
<b>Completed Education</b>	<b>-1.8</b>	<b>***</b>
Had a non-marital birth age	1.7 -.04	
<b>Practiced TS in last 12 months</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>***</b>
<b>Lifetime sexual partners</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>***</b>
<b>2+ sex partners in last 12 months</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>**</b>
<b>Justified physical VAW</b>	<b>1.9</b>	<b>*</b>
p < .05 * , p<.01** , p<.001***		

- **Tested MPBS Correlation with**
  - GEMS (-.02) (Pulerwitz, 2008)
  - Sexual Relationship Power Scale (-.23) (Pulerwitz, 2000)



# Implications and next steps

## Summary

- MPBS assesses adherence to relationship expectations in patriarchal societies
- We find association between MPBS scores, sexual risk behaviors, and justification of VAW
- Future directions → Larger, generalizable sample, men
- Implications
  - May contribute to explaining HOW women are at risk of HIV through TS
  - Inform interventions –importance of critically assessing the “male provider role” and related expectations



# Thank you!

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