

Developing Experimental Vignettes to Identify Gender Norms Associated with Transactional Sex in Central Uganda

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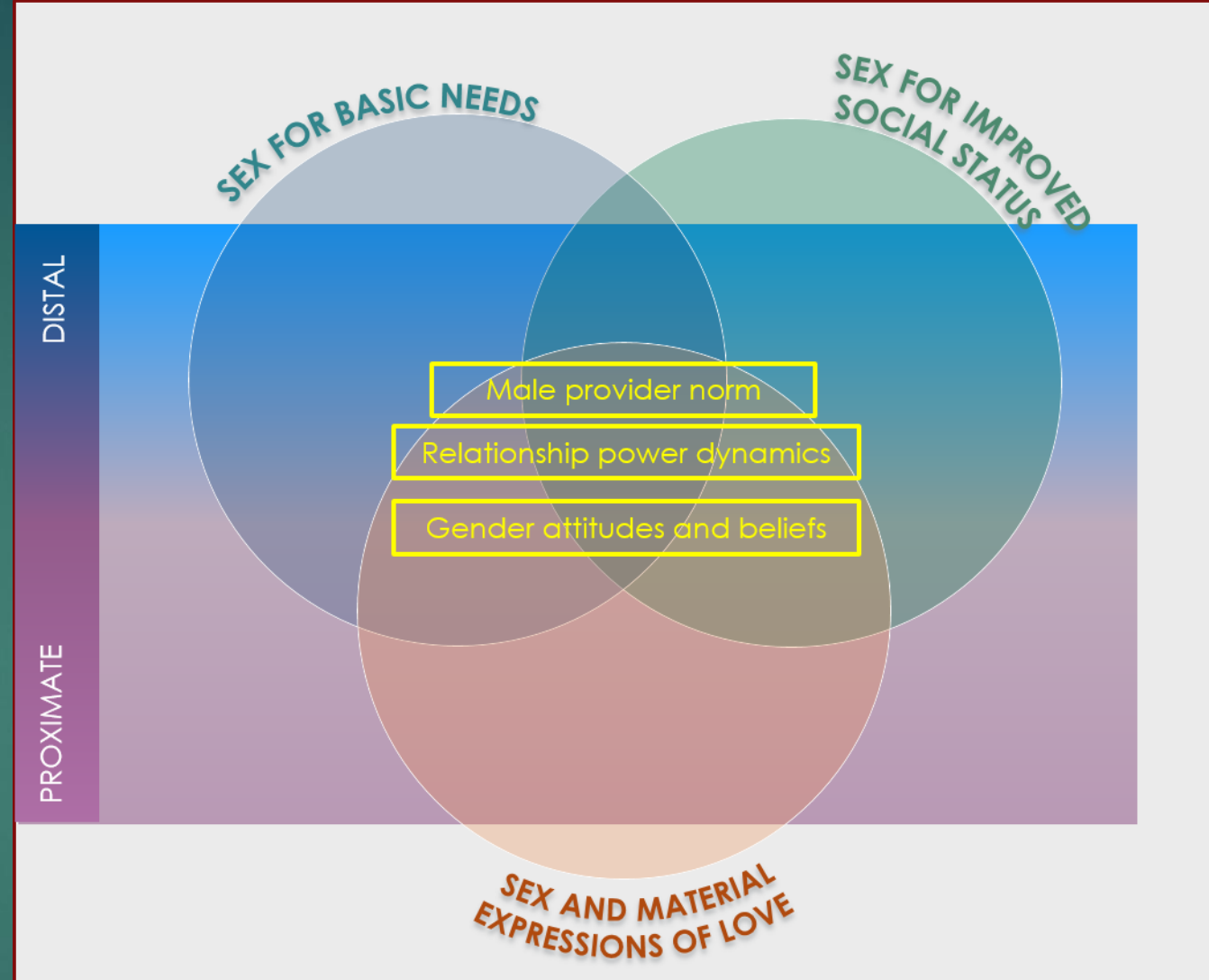


Funders and Collaborators

- ▶ We would like to thank STRIVE and the Washington, D.C. Center for AIDS Research (CFAR) Pilot Award, (A1117970).
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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 (Ranganathan, 2020); 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



Transactional sex refers to noncommercial, nonmarital sexual relationships motivated by the implicit assumption that sex will be exchanged for material support or other benefits. (Stoebenau et al, 2016)

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
 - ▶ 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)



Develop and test experimental vignettes to measure gender social norms* concerning male provision in relationships

- ▶ What do we mean by “experimental vignette”?

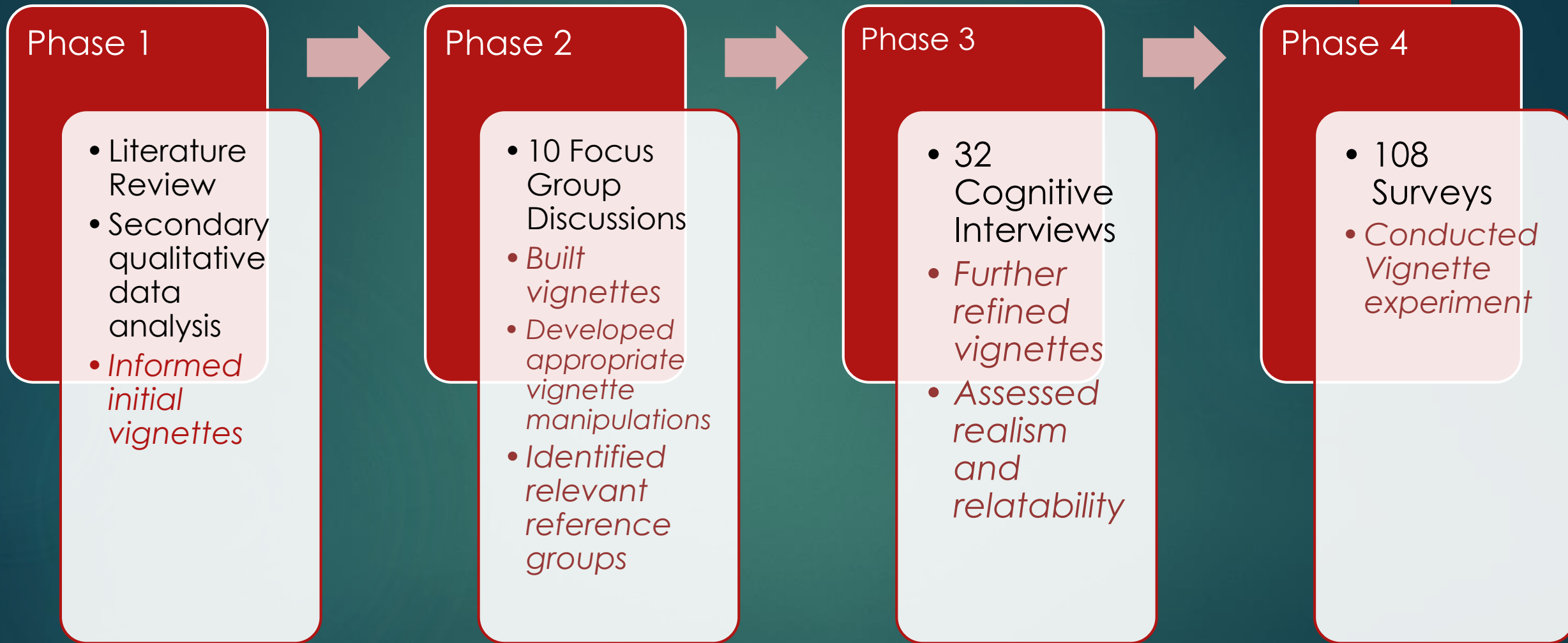
John and Sarah have been in a relationship for some time. He has been providing Sarah with:

- 1. a little money for her to buy clothes, and airtime.*
- 2. things important to her; he has given her a smart phone and gives her any money she says she needs.*

Last week, he asked her to have sex for the first time. She said she was not ready. John becomes angry with her.

- ▶ Randomly stratify respondents to receive one of two manipulations of the vignette.
 - ▶ Assess approval/disapproval of behavior across different groups for each manipulation of the vignette
 - “On this scale of 1-4, how much do you (think John’s friends/ community members would) approve of John’s behavior?”

Vignette Development Process across Phases 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)

Three “successful” vignettes:

1. Male provision and authority
2. Male provision and sexual decision-making control
3. Male provision and women having multiple partners

Two “unsuccessful” vignettes:

1. Male provision and women’s economic position
2. Male provision and parent’s role in TS

Table 2: Experimental vignettes used to examine social norms associated with male provision

| Male provision and authority in relationships (Vignette A) | |
|--|---|
| <p>Cate and Paul have been in a relationship for three months. Cate is 17 and in school and Paul is 20 and working.</p> | |
| <i>Manipulation 1:</i> | --- |
| <i>Manipulation 2:</i> | <i>Paul has been providing Cate with clothes and money to buy things that are important to her.</i> |
| <p>Last week, Cate went out to have fun with a group of her friends without Paul. Paul learned about it, and then told Cate she should never go out with her friends without his permission.</p> | |
| Male provision and sexual decision-making power (Vignette B) | |
| <p>John and Sarah have been in a relationship for some time.</p> | |
| <i>Manipulation 1:</i> | <i>He has been providing Sarah with a little money for her to buy clothes, and airtime.</i> |
| <i>Manipulation 2:</i> | <i>He has been providing Sarah with things important to her; he has given her a smart phone and gives her any money she says she needs.</i> |
| <p>Last week, he asked to have sex with her for the first time, but she said she no. John becomes angry with her.</p> | |
| Women’s engagement with multiple partners for male provision (Vignette C) | |
| <p>Stella and Stephen are in school together and have been together for over a year. They love each other.</p> | |
| <i>Manipulation 1:</i> | <i>Stephen is only able to sometimes buy snacks for Stella.</i> |
| <i>Manipulation 2:</i> | <i>Stephen has been giving her money in addition to buying her snack every day.</i> |
| <p>Yet, Stella needs (more) money in order to be able to buy trendy clothes so she can fit in with her friends, so she found a second boyfriend to support her.</p> | |

Results

- ▶ **Attitude** – How much do you approve?
- ▶ **Descriptive Norm** – On a scale of 0-10, how many (men/women) would behave like ___ if zero is none, five is half, and 10 is every (woman/man)?
- ▶ **Injunctive Norm** – How much do you think ___'s friends/community would approve of ___?

| | Men's Authority | Sexual decision-making | Women's multiple partners | Women's wealth | Scale |
|-----------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|-------|
| Attitude | 2.76 (1.09)** | 2.13 (1.03)** | 2.36 (1.09) | 2.60(0.98) | 1-4 |
| D. Norm | 7.56 (2.31) | 7.99 (2.41) | 7.63 (2.06) | 6.71 (2.58) | 1-10 |
| I.Norm - friend | 1.72 (0.87) | | 3.46 (0.65)** | 3.33(0.81) | 1-4 |
| I.Norm - friend | 3.42 (0.83) | 3.49 (0.75) | 3.32 (0.77)** | | 1-4 |
| IN-community | 2.57 (1.08) | 2.32 (0.91)*** | 2.14 (0.87) | 2.35(0.98) | 1-4 |
| | | | | | |

Test of Difference Across Manipulation (no/low provision to high provision)

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001

Results

In every vignette we are examining whether the level (or presence) of men's provision of material support to women changes the social expectation for men's or women's behavior including: respondent's attitude, descriptive norms, and injunctive norms

▶ *Does male provision influence normative expectations about male authority in relationships?*

- ▶ NO
- ▶ But it does influence respondent's own attitudes
 - ▶ provision = individual approval of male authority in relationships

▶ *Does male provision influence normative expectations about men's sexual decision-making power in relationships?*

- ▶ YES – at the perceived community level
 - ▶ Greater provision, greater approval of his power
- ▶ Respondent's own attitudes were influenced by provision as well

▶ *Does male provision influence normative expectations about women having a second partner?*

- ▶ YES – at the perceived interactional level (friends/peers)
 - ▶ Less provision, more approval of having a second partner
- ▶ Attitudes and perceived community approval were low

Discussion and Next Steps

▶ Intervention Implications

- ▶ Male authority expectations important but not explanatory for TS risk
- ▶ Male sexual decision-making power and women taking multiple partners do seem contingent on normative male provision expectations
 - ▶ Gender norm change interventions to disentangle male provision from male sexual control
 - ▶ Increased social acceptance of multiple partners for women adds urgency to above

▶ Vignette experiments offer potential alternative measurement approach to detecting the presence and strength of social norms

- ▶ Particularly valuable when addressing topics with high social desirability bias (e.g., justifications of GBV)
- ▶ Not perfect – issues of balancing realism, relatability, and measureable manipulation

▶ Missing: MEN! And large enough sample to allow further manipulations

Thank You!

▶ Questions?: kstoeben@umd.edu