

The Relationship Between PrEP and Risky Sex

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The HIV epidemic

- 1980s saw many men who have sex with men (MSM) dying of HIV/AIDS related complications
- People were worried, puzzled
- Little governmental action initially taken



(Photo by Pete Jimenez)

Progress in Slowing Spread of HIV

- Antiretroviral therapies introduced in the 1990s, stronger highly active antiretrovirals released later
- Does not prevent HIV, but slows/prevents progression to AIDS
- Life-lengthening treatment for adherent patients
- Post-exposure prophylaxis prevents HIV replication after exposure to the virus



(BBC, 2017)

PrEP – A Revolutionary Approach

- Approved in 2012 after rigorous trials
- 95% reduction in risk of acquiring HIV
- Awareness remains low in MSM communities despite its effectiveness
- A somewhat controversial drug...



(USA Today, 2014)

Risk Compensation?

- Much controversy surrounding whether or not PrEP influences people to have riskier sex
- Evidence for both sides of the argument
- Ecological validity in most studies is lacking
- Could reinforce stigma, prevent prescription of medication for eligible candidates



(English Language & Usage, 2011)

Why study PrEP?

- Afford equitable access to preventative medications
- Provide more evidence-based examples of where PrEP is working and not working
- Understand how different personality characteristics may affect one's risk factors for contracting HIV
- Rates of HIV infection are still very high in certain groups



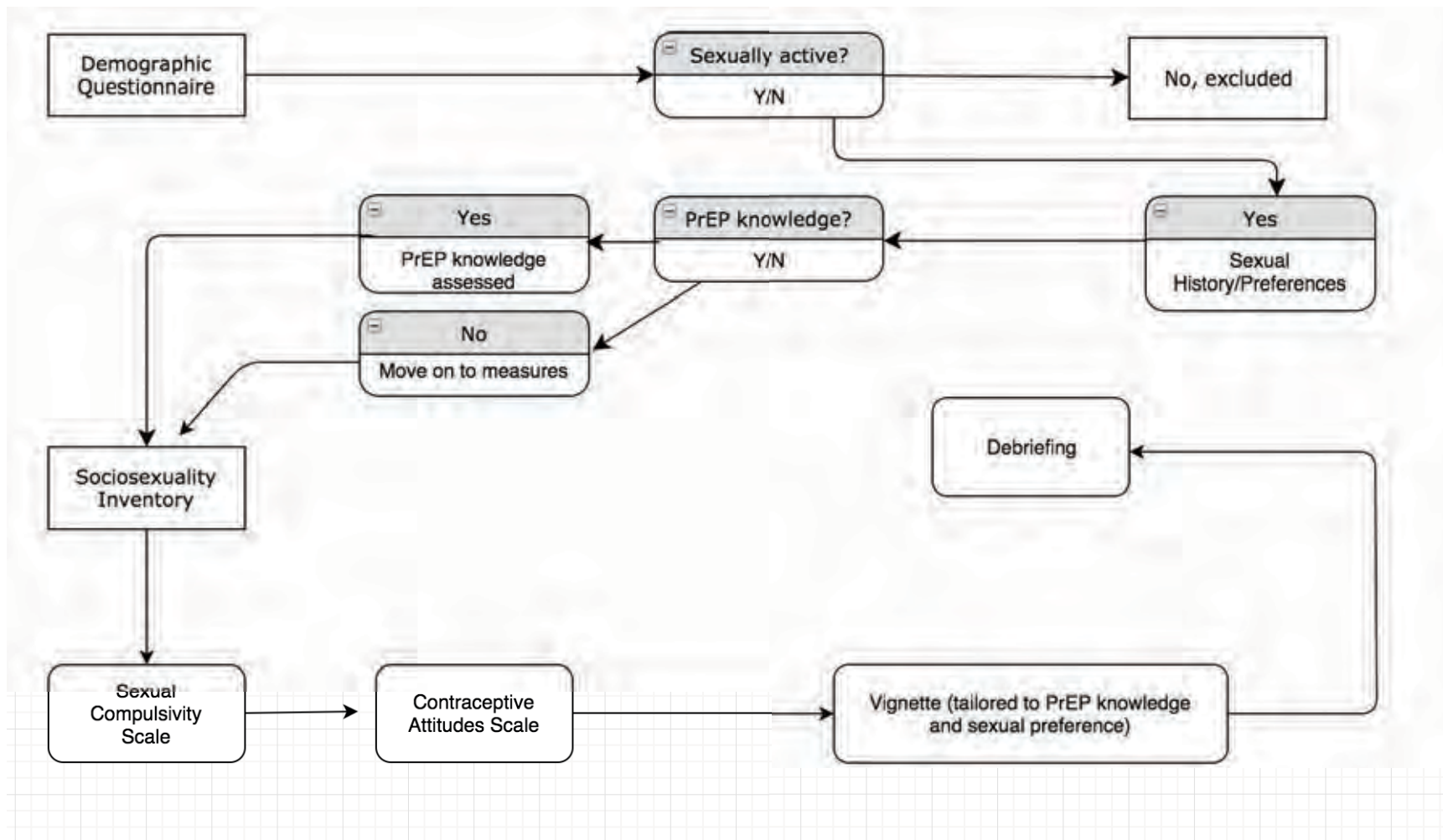
(Whitman-Walker Health, 2014)

Hypotheses

- PrEP knowledge will be higher among men who indicate sexual preference for men
- PrEP knowledge will positively relate to propensity for risky sex
- Sociosexual Orientation, Sexual Compulsivity, and Contraceptive Attitudes will mediate the relationship between PrEP knowledge and propensity for risky sex

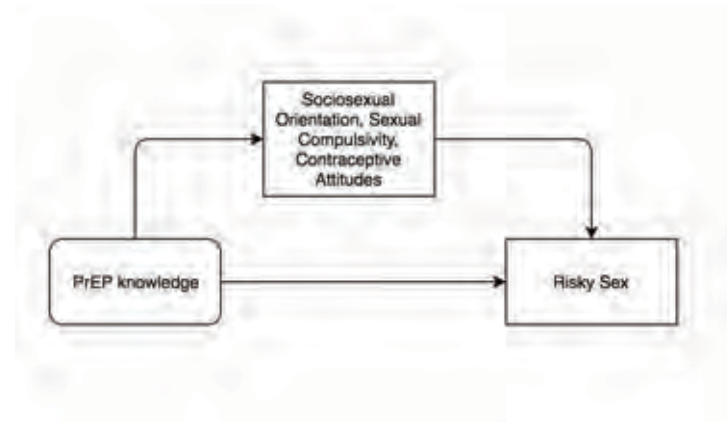
Sociosexuality, Sexual Compulsivity

- Sociosexual orientation – one’s favorability toward uncommitted sex
 - “With how many partners have you had sexual intercourse in the last 12 months?”
 - Rate your level of agreeance: “Sex without love is okay.”
- Sexual compulsivity – a problematic preoccupation with sex that interferes with daily life; increases risk of contracting sexually transmitted infections
 - “I find myself thinking about sex at work.”
 - “I become so aroused I could lose control.”



Expected Results/Data Analysis

- Multiple regression analysis on dependent and independent variables
- Mediation analysis via regression models for measures
- We predict significant main effects of PrEP knowledge on likelihood of risky sex, with our other measures mediating this relationship



Major Alternatives

- PrEP knowledge could have no effect on likelihood of risky sex (plausible)
- Risky sex could be related to sociosexual orientation subscales, sexual compulsivity, and/or contraceptive attitudes, but not PrEP knowledge (possible)
- PrEP knowledge may influence likelihood of risky sex, without mediating variables (improbable)



(Philip Givon, 2015)

Thank you!!!

- Questions?