



Girls Invest, a mobile-enabled economic empowerment intervention to reduce intimate partner violence among adolescent females in Nigeria: Findings and lessons learned

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Background

- Research has documented the high prevalence of intimate partner violence (IPV) (23-49%) against girls in Nigeria
- Economic empowerment-based interventions have shown promise to reduce IPV among adolescent girls in other global regions
- Economic empowerment interventions may intervene on social and economic factors associated with IPV:
 - Reduce economic vulnerability and associated financial reliance on male partnerships
 - Reduce social norms that support IPV



Background

- We developed and evaluated Girls Invest: Nigeria, an economic empowerment intervention for girls in Ibadan, Nigeria
- Girls Invest provides incentives supporting girls' educational/vocational goals upon their completion of mobile app-based trainings
- Girls Invest trainings promote financial literacy and aim to raise girls' critical consciousness related to gender-based economic and social constraints that promote IPV (e.g., economic constraints that promote financial dependence on male partners, social norms that support IPV)



Aims



To present qualitative and quantitative findings as well as lessons learned from our evaluation of Girls Invest among girls from 16 secondary schools in low-income districts of Ibadan, Nigeria

1. Lessons learned related to implementation
2. Qualitative data findings from five focus groups (n=60 participants)
3. Quantitative survey data findings (n=256)

Methods



- Recruited girls from 16 secondary schools in low-income districts of Ibadan, Nigeria



- Conducted a randomized controlled trial with schools randomly assigned to either receive Girls Invest or to a waitlist control arm (n=8 schools/arm)



- Survey implemented at baseline and 6 months follow up (n=256)



- Focus groups (n=5, approximately 12/group) conducted at follow-up among participants in the Girls Invest intervention, to understand satisfaction and impact of intervention



- Process outcome data on intervention completion (app-based data), as well as receptivity and feasibility (via focus groups)



Methods



- **Qualitative data:**

Data were analyzed using conceptual content analyses and independently coded by two researchers for themes related to participants' satisfaction as well as intervention impact



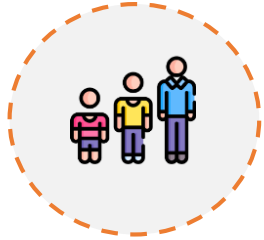
- **Quantitative data:**

- Survey measures: Sample characteristics (age, religion, relationship status etc.), Gender and economic factors associated with IPV
- A difference-in-differences approach was used to assess changes between baseline and follow-up in:
 - 1) Attitudes supportive of traditional gender roles
 - 2) Attitudes supportive of IPV
 - 3) Coping with experiences of gender-based discrimination
 - 4) Perceptions of economic vulnerability



Results: Demographics of participants

Sample Characteristics



16 years

Average age of participants



22%

reported working/earning income



96%

were from the Yoruba tribe of southwest Nigeria



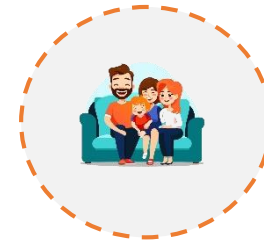
46%

reported having an apprenticeship



57%

were Muslims



74%

lived with parents



74%

had not ever had a relationship

(15% reported a current relationship)

No statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) between intervention and the wait-list control conditions in sample characteristics

Results: Implementation Findings

- Among the 190 girls randomized to the intervention arm, 75% (n= 142 girls) participated in the intervention and 98% completed all 5 levels of the app trainings
- Participants reported overall satisfaction with the app trainings and vocational/educational gifts.

“The program influenced me to be courageous, loyal, honest, proud to express my feelings to the young ones, how to save my money and how to be prepared for apprenticeship.”

“I didn’t have money to buy instruments so I was happy and thankful to be given a [sewing machine].”

“The money is [helpful] because many are training for a vocation but do not have money to buy the equipment.”

- Participants reported to acquire new knowledge in the program

“[Girls Invest] taught me about things I haven’t passed through because some do not have opportunity like this.”

“When we grow up we will always remember what girls invest taught us.”



Results: Focus Group Findings



Participants reported greater awareness of issues regarding gender equity and women's rights

“What Girls Invest taught us is gender roles, the job a man can do and what a woman can also do

“It taught us that there is nothing a girl child cannot do in this life and men will be surprised.”

“When I was 14 years old, my father discouraged me from learning vocational skills but when I joined Girls Invest, I was insistent on learning it.”

“I used to agree with those fathers [who do not prioritize their daughters' education] but now I now know female education is good.”

“Some people believe that girls cannot be great and become an important person in the society. So they don't send girl child to school. But this training taught us we should go to school. There are many things a woman can do, a woman can be ...big things in the society.”



Results: Focus Group Findings

Girls reported learning more about relationships & dating violence



“I learnt about healthy and unhealthy relationships.”

“I feel more confident to know the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships.”

Girls reported greater confidence to leave an unhealthy relationship if they experienced abuse

“I feel more confident to leave an unhealthy relationship.”

“[Because of participating in Girls Invest], I feel confident to leave an unhealthy relationship.”



Results: Focus Group Findings



Girls reported learning about the intersection of money, power & relationships:

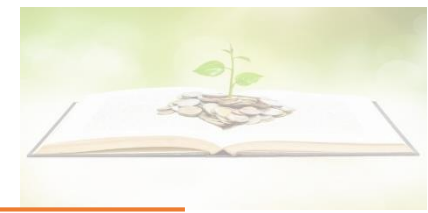
“[Girls Invest] taught me how money can affect relationships.”

“Yes, [I learned] that we should have equal rights when it comes to [decisions related to] sex and money.”

“[Girls Invest] has affected how we think about [relationships with] men, I want to be financially independent.”

“[After participating in Girls Invest], it makes me feel that when I make my own money, my partner cannot order me around.”

Results: Focus Group Findings



Girls reported improved financial literacy & economic self-sufficiency:

“[Girls Invest] helped us learn how to manage our finance.”

“I learnt about savings. Before I do not save money because I buy a lot of junk. My father scolds me for using all my money to buy junks. But since I joined Girls Invest, I’ve started saving money.”

“[Girls Invest] helped us to be financially independent.”

“[Girls Invest] influence me on how a woman can be financially independent because some women do wait for their husband before they can buy maggi.”

Results: Focus Group Findings



Girls reported that Girls Invest supported their expectations for the future

“[Girls Invest] gave me more courage to pursue my future career.”

“[Girls Invest] made me to be stronger and know that challenges are temporary.”

“[Girls Invest] helps to have self-esteem to support my future.”

Girls reported sharing the information with friends and sisters

“Yes, because some of my friends at home, I tell them about it I share what I’ve learnt , because it make some impact on my life, it had good influence on me. “

“I have taught my friends, elder sisters; and my mummy also ...she said I should introduce people to [the topics from Girls Invest].”

Comparison of Mean Scores for Gender and Economic Related Outcomes between Girls Invest Intervention Group (n=130) and Control Group (n=126)

Gender related outcomes	Baseline Mean (SD)	6 Month follow-up Mean (SD)	Mean Difference	p value
Attitudes supportive of traditional gender roles				
Intervention Group	3.42 (0.69)	2.94 (0.81)	-0.48 (0.95)	0.009
Control Group	3.50 (0.68)	3.32 (0.62)	0.18 (0.87)	
Attitudes supportive of IPV				
Intervention Group	2.49 (1.08)	2.21 (1.11)	-0.29 (1.41)	0.57
Control Group	2.43 (1.02)	2.23 (1.00)	-0.20 (1.14)	
Coping with experiences of gender-based discrimination				
Intervention Group	3.59 (0.93)	3.73 (1.05)	0.14 (1.3)	0.019
Control Group	3.75 (0.96)	3.51 (0.97)	-0.24 (1.3)	
Economic related outcome				
Perceptions of economic vulnerability				
Intervention Group	3.58 (0.65)	3.77 (0.87)	-0.19 (0.89)	0.09
Control Group	3.66 (0.57)	3.66 (0.80)	0.002 (0.78)	



Lessons Learned: Challenges



CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION OF CHALLENGES	ACTION STEPS TAKEN DURING IMPLEMENTATION	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE
App-related challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> App is very basic due to its low cost and created by a student in training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Glitches in the app, including challenges to create the app to function without needing data, upon being download 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply for funding and rebuild some elements of the app
Opening savings account	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anyone under 18 had to open the account under the ID of an adult, which created a major challenge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We provided participants with a different form of incentives to foster their ongoing educational and career development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scale up Girls Invest is to move forward without the savings account
Improve content on financial literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While most participants stated they learned new things, some felt like they still struggled with some of the concepts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We further supported girls' understanding of the content via the booklet as well as in-person check-ins. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with a curriculum development organization Include community and school representatives in community advisory board

Lessons Learned: Successes



CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	ACTION STEPS TAKEN DURING IMPLEMENTATION	RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE
High program completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls had strong interest in the training with high level of completion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Girls Invest PIs and staff continued to learn how to maintain participant interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to focus on schools for Girls Invest in the future. Look into other community-based options.
High level of satisfaction and learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Girls reported more awareness on health and finances from Girls' Invest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FGDs highlighted girls' high level of satisfaction and several identified benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced app will increase satisfaction and learning Content and platform were appropriate for the girls
High level of community interest and schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools are interested in using Girls Invest to support financial literacy and health training among students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project team built new relationship with schools across Ibadan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship with schools would be helpful in refining curriculum
Satisfaction with training items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of alternative incentives due to challenges with opening savings accounts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sewing machines, hair dryers, baking ovens, as alternative incentives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to use incentives as gifts Assess types of gifts preferred by participants

Conclusions



- Girls Invest has promise in mitigating social and economic constraints associated with IPV.
- A full-scale trial is needed to understand longer term outcomes on IPV.
- Findings build upon prior studies highlighting the potential of economic interventions to promote girls' social and economic empowerment, and thereby, reduce risks associated with IPV.
- Mobile app-based interventions have the potential , given the increasing ownership of smartphones in Nigeria.
 - **Mobile technology may be a useful platform to support scalability considering its lower in cost compared to traditional in-person approaches.



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*Thank you
for Listening!*

