Social grants have been found to impact health and welling in multiple settings. \(^1\) Who receives the grant, however, has been the subject of discussion with regards to how grant money is spent and who benefits from the grant.

**SOCIAL GRANTS TRADITIONALLY PAID TO ADULTS**

- Most grants paid to adult women as benefits likely for the child(ren)
- Less evidence of men as beneficiaries – but have noted some negative outcomes\(^4\)

**WHAT ABOUT ADOLESCENTS?**

- Recent focus on the potential for social protection programmes to reduce HIV risk in adolescents
- Relatively few programs pay social grants directly to adolescents
- Concerns of negative outcomes from accessing cash particularly in South Africa context where there have been continued rumours about negative associations with the Child Support grant, despite no evidence\(^5\)

**INTERVENTION**

- Young women and their parent/guardian paid monthly cash transfer conditional on 80% school attendance
- 36% of young women decided how to spend the money on school attendance or would decrease HIV incidence
- Data collected at baseline and annually for 3 years from March 2011 – March 2015

**THE MEANING OF CASH**

- As well as discussing how they managed the cash that they received through the study, young women also talked about the significant meaning that cash access held for them.

**INDEPENDENCE**

- Most young women discussed the significance of having money that they could make their own decisions about
- Young women were conscious that the money allowed for independence and protected their relationships with their mothers by reducing their requests for cash

**PEER STATUS & IDENTITY**

- Identity formation and peer belonging frequently discussed in interviews
- Young women spoke about how access to cash was significant in facilitating their peer group
- Peer acceptance influenced by personal appearance at school – specifically cleanliness and school uniform
- Conspicuous, ‘poverty’ money for snacks at school part of peer identity
- Most participants talked about wanting a better future than their own current – symbolically signified through a career, access to their own money, assisting parents and community and having their own home

**QUALITATIVE COHORT**

- Purposive sub-sample of young women selected to participate in a longitudinal qualitative cohort
- Interviewed twice annually during enrolment in main study for a potential six interviews
- Face-to-face interviews conducted with trained, Shangaan-speaking interviewers

**ANALYSIS – QUANTITATIVE SURVEY**

- Baseline HIV-negative young women who completed at least one follow up visit (n=1209)
- Constructed a single variable from responses to each question across data collection points

**RESULTS**

- This study is one of the first to document spending patterns of young African women receiving cash transfers for HIV prevention
- High levels of autonomy and decision making about the money – separate from household or sibling expenses
- In contrast to general perspectives on pooling of income and expense
- May reflect fact that parent grant used for household expenses
- Value of cash transfer as a vehicle for young women’s independence and autonomy should not be underestimated
- Specifically addresses social needs for ‘commodities of modernity which are adolescent’s only real access to power’\(^3\)
- Very low level of negative outcomes associated with receiving the grant, in contrast to some other experiences in Africa\(^1\)

**REFERENCES**

1. Hill, Department of Epidemiology, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, United States

2. HPTN 068 Study Design & Purpose\(^4\). Conducted among adolescent women aged 13-20 years

3. In Agincourt Health & Demographic Surveillance Site (AHDSIS), rural Mpyumanga, South Africa

4. Purpose of Study. To determine if a cash transfer conditional on school attendance, would decrease HIV incidence in a grantees population

5. Data collected at baseline and annually for 3 years from March 2011 – March 2015

6. Young women and their parent/guardian paid monthly cash transfer conditional on 80% school attendance

7. Most participants talked about wanting a better future than their own current – symbolically signified through a career, access to their own money, assisting parents and community and having their own home

8. ‘I feel happy before because I got money from the study. I didn’t go to my mother all the time. I wanted to buy [sanitary] pads and it was difficult for me, sometimes I felt like a burden to her.’

9. ‘There are no risk behaviours because of this money. I know how to manage it. I don’t buy drugs or alcohol. Most of the time I spend the money on the most important things. I don’t abuse the money.’

10. ‘I give to my siblings because I help my mom in giving them pocket money to use at school. I want her to stop for a while in running around to help her when I have money. I give it to them to use at school.’

11. ‘The money I am getting from the grant, I bought a school uniform. It has boosted me because children at school no longer laugh at me.’

12. ‘Sometimes I went to school without pocket money. - There are great changes [since participating in the study] because my friends were having money most of the time and I felt like I am left out.’

13. ‘It feels good because no one controls it but me’

**DISCUSSION**

- Purposive sub-sample of young women selected to participate in a longitudinal qualitative cohort
- Interviewed twice annually during enrolment in main study for a potential six interviews
- Face-to-face interviews conducted with trained, Shangaan-speaking interviewers

**APPROVAL**

- The findings of this study are part of the data collection process of the HPTN 068 Study. The findings of this study should be interpreted in the context of the overall study of the HPTN 068 Study. The authors of this study are responsible for the accuracy of the presentation of the data. The ethical approval for this study was obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the Agincourt Health & Demographic Surveillance Site, and the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa.