

Using social maps to explore young women's experiences with social support of their oral PrEP use in Kenya and South Africa

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Background

- Oral PrEP adherence is challenging for adolescent girls and young women (AGYW) in sub-Saharan Africa, despite their desire to stay HIV-free.
- POWER (Prevention Options for Women Evaluation Research) was a prospective, observational, open-label cohort study evaluating PrEP delivery approaches for AGYW ages 16-25 in Cape Town and Johannesburg, South Africa and Kisumu, Kenya
- This analysis explored AGYW's views on social influencers of PrEP use and AGYW's perception of those influencers' PrEP knowledge and support during the POWER study.

Methods

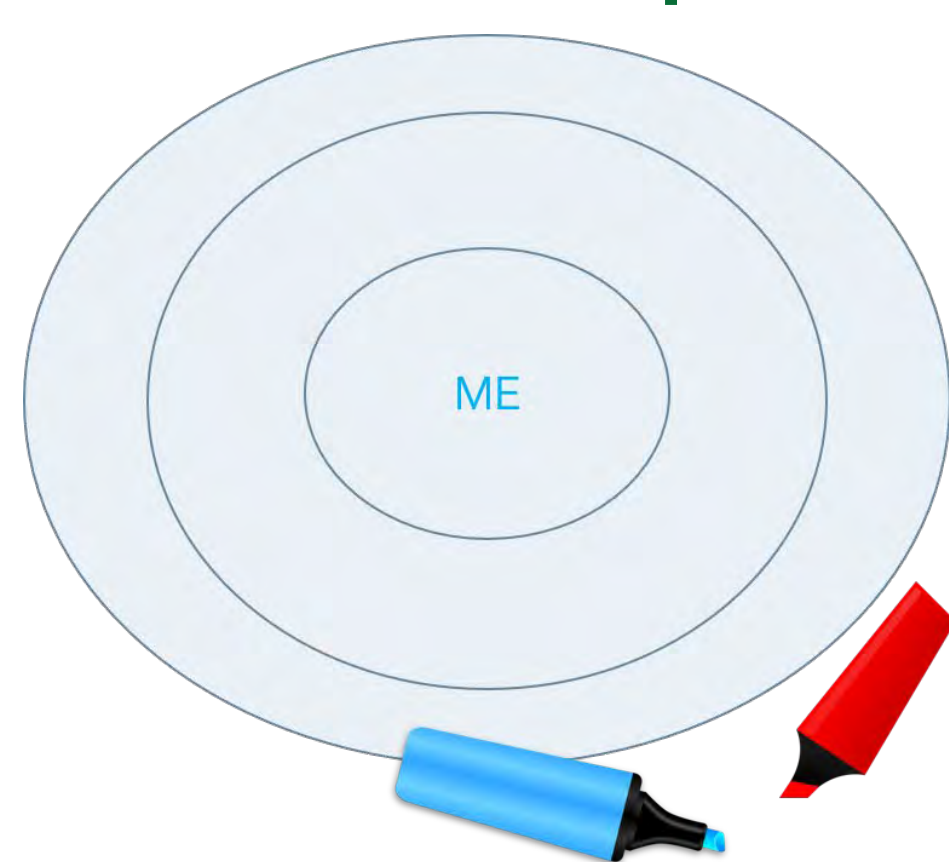
- Six Focus group discussions (FGD) were conducted with a purposive sample of 33 AGYW who had at least one PrEP refill during the POWER study.
- Social mapping exercise:**
 - Participants placed pre-labeled stickers of PrEP influencers (Figure 1) on an egocentric circle map (Figure 2), representing their level of influence (from inner/ most influential circle to outer/ least influential circle).
 - Participants color marked the influence with blue marker for positive, red marker for negative, or both (Figure 2) then discussed their map with the group.
- For this analysis, we quantitatively measured the number and type of social influencers by level of influence (inner, middle or outer circle) and qualitatively explored participants' stories of social support through rapid analysis of transcripts.

Figure 1. Sample of stickers provided to participants



Figure 2. Sample of egocentric circle and markers used by participants to create social maps

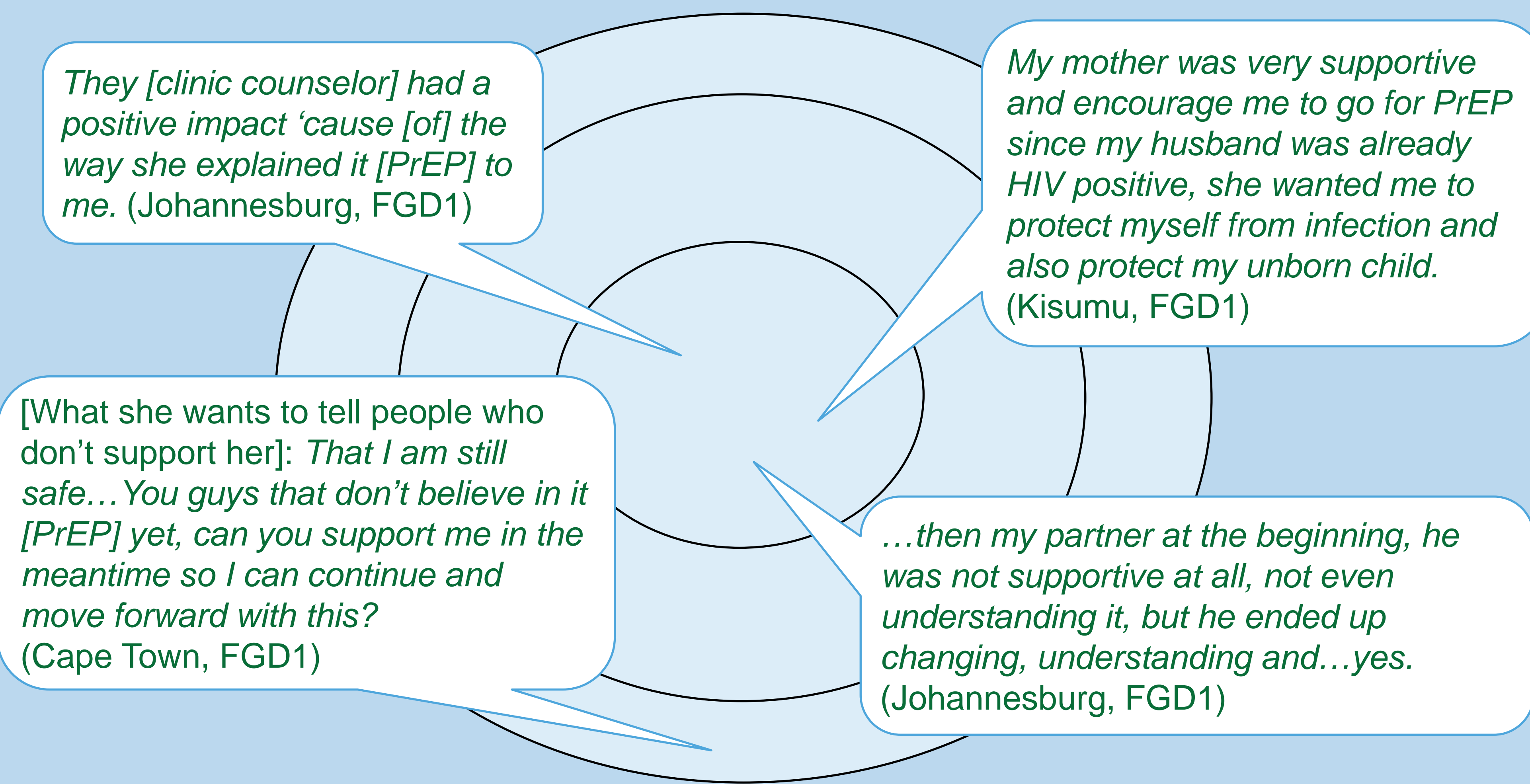
RED = negative influence
BLUE = positive influence



Summary

- Through social mapping, AGYW described key supporters and detractors, with mothers, counselors, and best friends emerging as important supporters of AGYW's PrEP use.
- To improve PrEP outcomes, community- and peer-based PrEP sensitization and delivery programs should be evaluated.

Mothers, counselors, and best friends emerged as important supporters of AGYW's PrEP use. Participants wanted all levels and types of influencers to be better educated about PrEP and ultimately to accept and support their PrEP use.



Results

Social Influencers:

- Mothers and counselors:** Labeled mostly as positive influencers (86%) and placed in the inner circle by >50% of participants (Table 1).
- Sex partners:** Placed in the inner circle by a majority (>50%) but were either labeled negative influencers (38%) or both positive and negative (44%).
- Peers:** Best friends (41% inner circle) were mostly positive influencers (63%) whereas "friend groups" (25% inner circle) were negative (50%) or both positive and negative (43%).
- For the inner circle, AGYW mentioned both direct (e.g., criticism or praise) and indirect influence (e.g., partner's behavior or knowing a person living with HIV).
- Participants labeled some outer circle influencers as uninterested or unwilling to learn about PrEP.
- Participants wanted all levels and types of influencers to be better educated about PrEP and ultimately to accept and support their PrEP use.

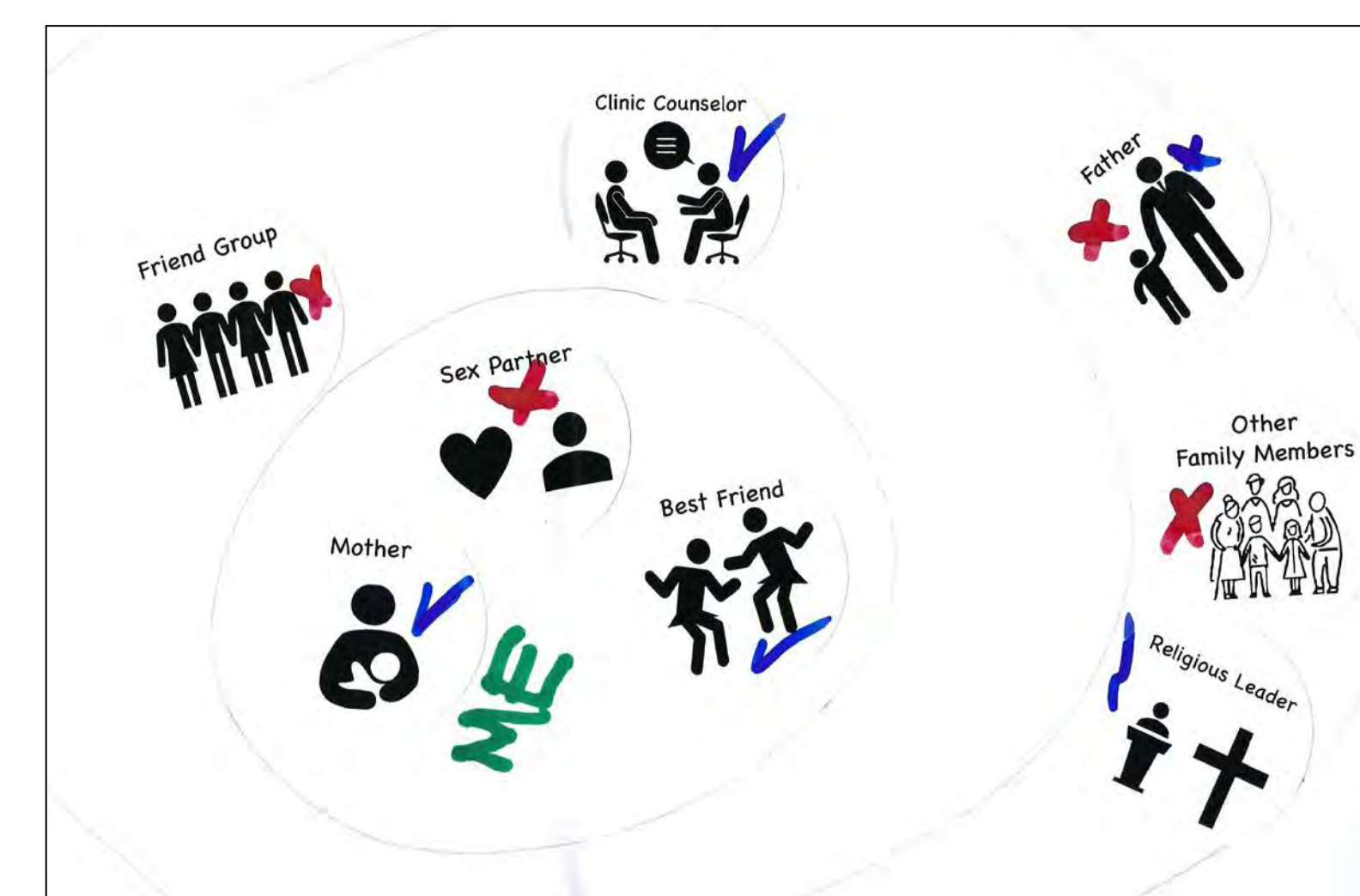
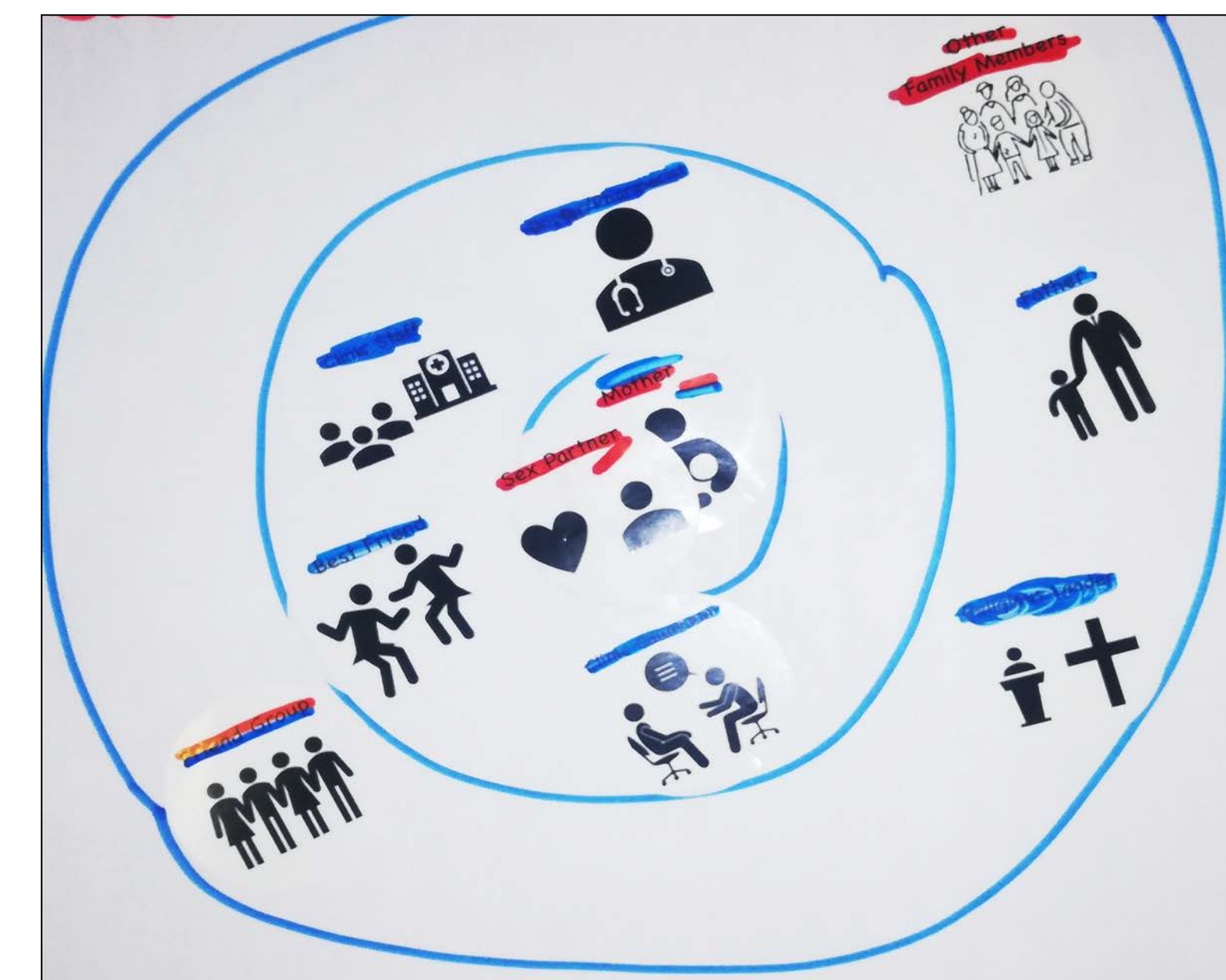


Table 1. Count of sticker choices by direction of influence and type of influencer (n=33)*

Direction of Influence	Mother	Clinic Counselor	Sex Partner	Best Friend	Friend Group	Other Family Members	Father	Clinic Staff	Religious Leader	Doctor/ Pharmacist	TOTALS
Total Positive	25	24	6	20	2	8	10	19	4	14	132
Total Negative	0	0	12	6	14	19	6	0	10	0	67
Total Both	4	4	14	6	12	9	5	1	5	4	64
TOTAL	29	28	32	32	28	36+	21	20	19	18	263

*Grey cells indicate that >50% of those influencer stickers were placed in the inner circle

+This group includes >100% mentions because 3 participants chose this sticker category and wrote-in additional family members (i.e., sister, uncle, and cousin)