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# Gender-Related Power Measures in The DHS Program's Questionnaires

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# Purpose

Data on some aspects of gender-related power are  
already available through the:

## Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS)

- Review what gender-related power items are available through DHS
  - By topic area
  - By type of power
- Discuss options for constructing gender-related power indicators
- Preview new items in DHS-8

# Types of Power

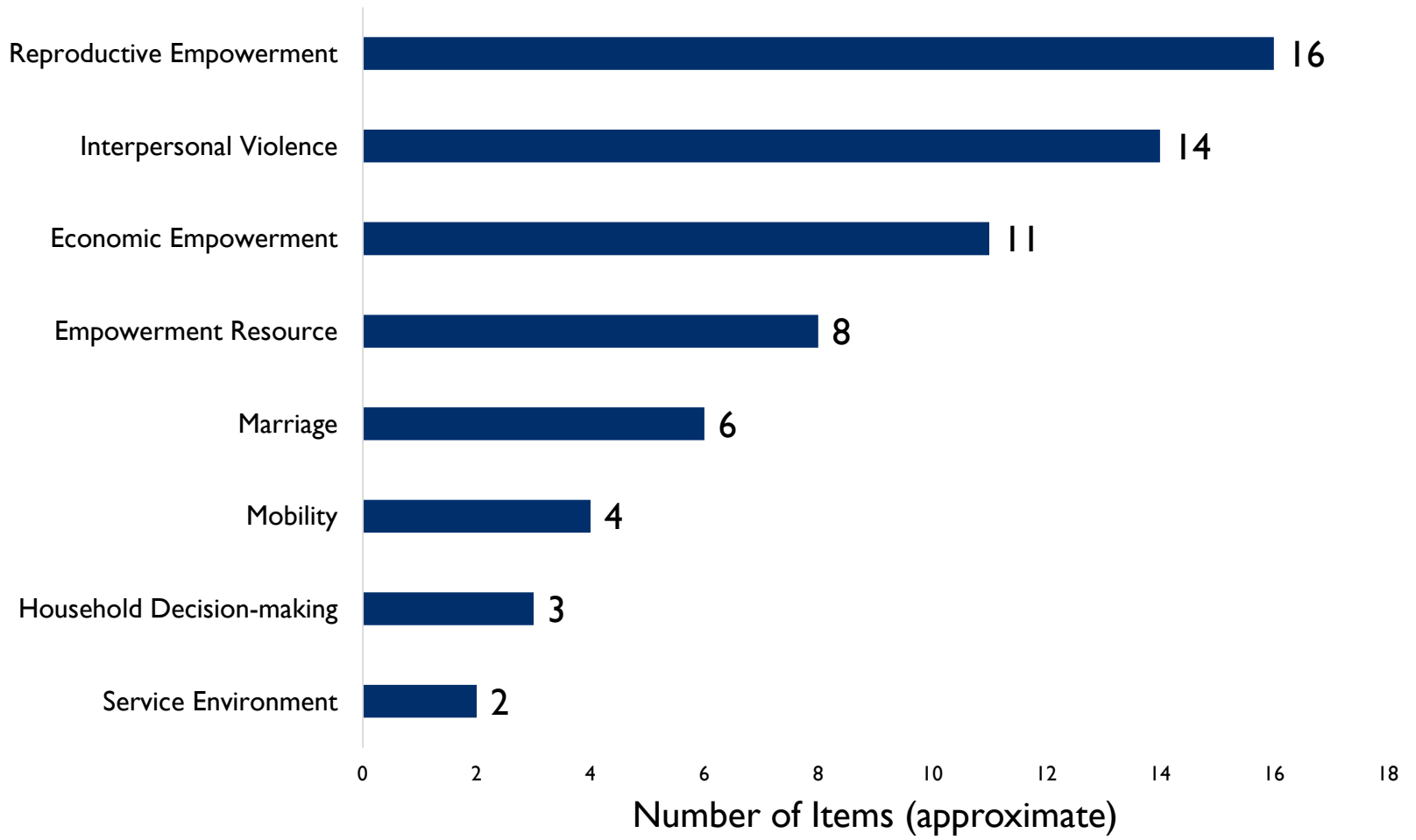
Classify items by:

- Power within—self-awareness/worth, realization of one's ability to act
- Power to—being able to create change and take action
- Power with—social power, capacity for collective action
- Power over—exerting control/influence over others

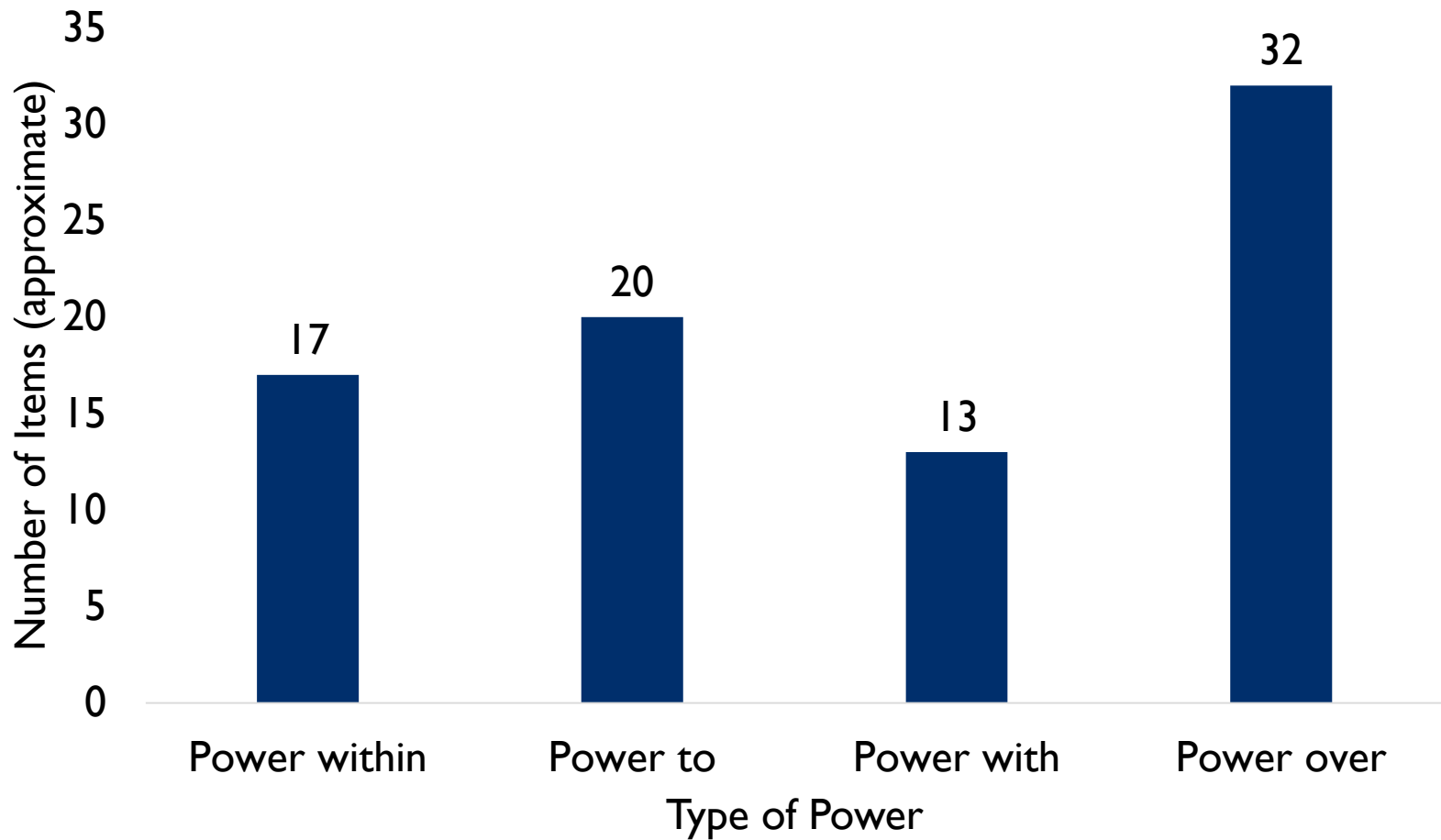
# — DHS Gender-related Power Items by the Numbers



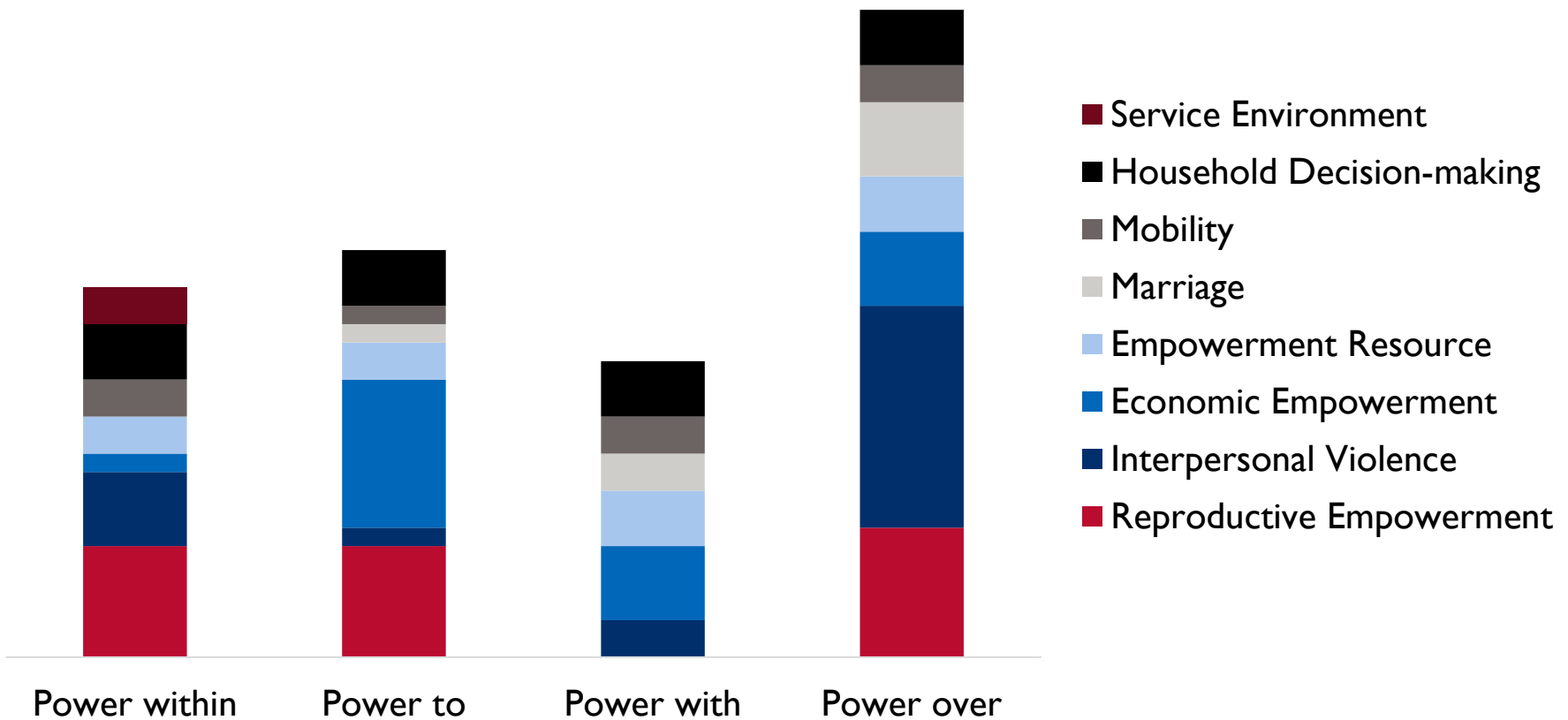
# Power Items in DHS by Topic Area



# Power Items in DHS by Type of Power



# Topic Areas by Type of Power



# Reproductive Empowerment

	Within	To	With	Over
Attitude toward wife insisting on condom when there is an STI	✓			
Attitude toward wife refusing sex with husband if he has other partners	✓			
Can refuse sex with husband		✓		
Can request husband uses condom		✓		
Ideal # of children: non-numeric answer	✓			
Contraceptive decision-maker for FP users and non-users		✓		✓
Contraceptive decision-maker: relative influence in joint decision-making		✓		✓
Reproductive coercion: pressure to get pregnant when you did not want				✓



# Reproductive Empowerment

	Within	To	With	Over
Reason for discontinuation: husband/partner disapproved				✓
Reason for not using: Husband/partner opposed				✓
Reason for not using: Others opposed				✓
Reason for not using: Religious prohibition	✓			✓
Reason for discontinuation: Up to god/fatalistic	✓			
Reason for not using: Up to god/fatalistic	✓			
Reason for discontinuation: wanted more effective method		✓		
Reason for discontinuation: desire to become pregnant		✓		

# Economic Empowerment

	Within	To	With	Over
Work outside of house for pay; occupation; employer		✓	✓	
Decide how own earnings are spent		✓	✓	✓
Woman's earnings compared to Husband's				✓
Decide how Husband's earnings are spent			✓	
Ownership of property; title/deed; in whose name		✓		
Own a mobile phone, smart phone		✓	✓	
Use of bank account		✓		
Use phone for banking		✓		
Used internet; how much in last 12 months		✓	✓	
Household decision-making: major household purchases		✓	✓	✓

# Interpersonal Violence

	Within	To	With	Over
Controlling behaviors: suspicion				✓
Controlling behaviors: isolation			✓	✓
Emotional violence (partner)	✓			✓
Physical violence (partner)				✓
Sexual violence (partner)				✓
Perpetrated physical violence				✓
Afraid of husband/partner	✓			✓
Physical violence by anyone while pregnant				✓
Physical violence by anyone other than partner, who, how often				✓
Sexual violence by anyone other than partner; age; who; how often				✓

# Interpersonal Violence

	Within	To	With	Over
Help seeking, who, talked to others		✓	✓	
Father ever beat mother?	✓			✓
Justification of wife beating in 5 scenarios: goes out, neglects children, argues, refuses sex, burns food	✓			✓

# — Constructing Power Measures



# How Have Power Measures Been Constructed

- Individual items as single measure
  - % women who used a bank account in past 12 months
- Composite scales
  - SDG Indicator 5.6.1 on SRH decision-making
  - SWPER Index

## SDG Indicator 5.6.1

- Proportion of women age 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use, and reproductive health care

	Within	To	With	Over
Can refuse sex with husband		✓		
Contraceptive decision-maker for FP users and non-users	✓	✓		✓
Household decision-making: own healthcare	✓	✓	✓	✓

# SWPER: Survey based Women's EmPowERment index

- 3 domains:
  - Attitude to violence
  - Social independence
  - Decision-making
- Draws from violence attitudes, empowerment resources, economic empowerment, and household decision-making
- Weighted score for each domain
- Resources:
  - Ewerling, F., et al. 2017. "The SWPER Index for Women's Empowerment in Africa: Development and Validation of an Index Based on Survey Data." *The Lancet Global Health*. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X\(17\)30292-9](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S2214-109X(17)30292-9).
  - Ewerling, F., et al. 2019. "A Survey-Based Women's Empowerment Index for Low- and Middle-Income Countries: The SWPER Goes Global " *The Lancet* preprint. <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3466986>.



## SWPER: Survey based Women's EmPowERment index

	Within	To	With	Over
Justification of wife beating in 5 scenarios: (5 separate items)	✓			✓
Frequency of reading newspaper or magazine	✓	✓	✓	
Women's education (years)	✓	✓	✓	
Age at first birth				
Age at first marriage				✓
Spousal age difference				✓
Spousal education difference	✓	✓	✓	
Household decision-making: healthcare, purchases, family visits (3 separate items)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Worked in past 12 months*		✓	✓	

# — New in DHS-8



## NEW in DHS-8: Gender and women's empowerment

- More questions on contraceptive decision making
  - More detail on joint decision making; questions are asked of more respondents now (all women in union, not just family planning users)
- Marriage certificates/marriage registration
- Duration of current union (for women married more than once)
- Who fetches water for the household
- Woman's use of a bank account for deposits/withdrawals
- Men: Did your father ever beat your mother?

## Family planning/Reproductive health

- Menstrual hygiene
- Age at menarche



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**THANK YOU**

