

# AN INVESTIGATION OF STUDENTS' EARLY PREGNANCY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: CAUSES, CONSEQUENCES IN DODOMA REGION

Ahmed Mike Shillinde<sup>1</sup>, Dr Chen Dianbing<sup>2</sup>, Mshenga Khamis Ramadhani<sup>3</sup>, Mbarouk Alihaji<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Master's Student at Zhejiang Normal University in China College of Education, Major: Comparative Education

<sup>2</sup>Lecture at the Zhejiang Normal University in the College of Education

<sup>3</sup>Student at the Zhejiang Normal University in China College of Education

<sup>4</sup>Student at the Zhejiang Normal University College of Education

**\*Corresponding Author:**

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## Abstract

Adolescent pregnancy is a global catastrophe that has recently emerged as a health issue and has a significant negative impact on the socioeconomic well-being of nations, cultures, and families. Parents, school officials, and other stakeholders have expressed serious concerns about students' pregnancy which is defined as an instance of a girls' student becoming pregnant between the ages of thirteen (13) and nineteen (19). The study aimed to find out the causes and consequences of students' pregnancy in Jamuhuri and City secondary schools in the Dodoma Region. For this study, a descriptive research design was chosen. The research was guided by three research questions. The researchers created a tool called "Students Early Pregnancy in Secondary School" to be used in gathering data. Experts validated the instrument, and test reliability was established. The Research Questions were addressed using mean statistics. The study's conclusions demonstrate that several factors, including the absence of comprehensive sex education, cultural and religious beliefs, insufficient support from schools, lack of adequate role models in the field of education, socioeconomic factors, stigma and taboos, peer pressure, the role played by the media, parenting lifestyle, poor using contraception, and financial circumstances, can contribute to student early pregnancy. The study also found that building hostels and girls' clubs, education for both parents and students, punishment for those impregnating students, and good relationships between parents and teachers are effective ways to reduce students' pregnancy among secondary school students. Other effects of students' early pregnancy include dropping out of school, health problems, isolation, and rejection by parents and peers. This study will assist teachers, students, and parents to work together and strengthen their cooperation toward their student's achievement at the schools.

**Keywords:** Early pregnancy, students, secondary school, female, teenage pregnancy.

## INTRODUCTION

Adolescent pregnancy is a global catastrophe that has recently emerged as a health issue and has a significant negative impact on the socioeconomic well-being of nations, cultures, and families. For female students, unintended pregnancy is the main reason for dropping out of school (Vieira Martins et al. 2023) According to a (WHO, 2010) report, around 16 million adolescent girls between the ages of 15 and 19 give birth annually. About 18.8% of African teenagers reported being pregnant in 2018, and in Tanzania, the rate of childbearing among young women aged 15 to 19 rose from 27% in 2016 to 55% in 2019 (Asmamaw et al. 2023). Additionally, the majority of these teenagers underwent abortions, which are harmful to their physical health and the sustainability of the planet. The combined rate of adolescent pregnancies in Zanzibar and the rest of Tanzania is 35%. With the projected increase in unwanted pregnancy among female students from 29% in 2016 to 45% in 2023, Dodoma is the leading region in Tanzania. According to Moshi et al (2023) 35% of young girl students and 34% of young boy students, respectively, have never engaged in sexual activity. 11% of the young girl's classmates who had ever engaged in sexual activity disclosed becoming pregnant, and 5% said they had never been exposed to an STD. Four percent of young boys in the class had never been given a sexually transmitted illness diagnosis. They led miserable lives. Due to the prevalence of early marriage and the fact that parents are often waiting for dowry, early pregnancies are widespread in Asian nations including Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, the Philippines, Nepal, Maldives, and Bhutan. In these nations, around 60% of girls marry by the age of 18, while in South Asia, one-fourth of girls marry against their will by the age of 15, some of whom are scholars (Uddin, 2020). In addition, (Dev et al. 2010) explain how Bangladeshi girls from lower socioeconomic backgrounds leave secondary schools or pursue further education. Due to the socioeconomic circumstances, the parents of the girls' influence, dowry is encouraged in the marriage. These young girls are not yet ready to be mothers, both psychologically and physically. Poudel et al. (2022) further explain that medically, early pregnancy, maternal, and prenatal health are of particular concern among school girls who are pregnant or parenting. According to WHO (2022) revealed that student pregnancy has severely destroyed developed and developing communities in the aspects of reputation, economic, and social status, generating a set of problems such as frequent absenteeism and form repetition in schools, dropping out of schools, and failure in academic performance. Simwanza et al. (2022) also highlight that in the Sub-Saharan Africa continent, many young girl students are in danger of becoming pregnant. These are serious problems for children to abandon school because they are afraid to be pregnant. Also, teenage pregnancy has negative consequences for the life of the girl child in the future For instance, (Svanemyr, 2020) points out that teenage pregnancy and HIV/AIDS are the main barriers to social development, employment possibilities, and academic performance for schoolgirl children in nations like Kenya, Zambia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe.

### Statement of problem

Although the Tanzania government eliminates school fees, parents are often unable to afford other school expenses such as transport, school uniforms, and other costs. This leads to a big problem for the student to find a way to meet these requirements. Actors in the national and international arena advocating for the educational rights of an estimated 8,000 expelled pregnant school girls condemn discriminatory education policies (Gibore et al. 2019) The revising of such policies is witnessed in Tanzania, on the island of Zanzibar, the 2007 amendment of the Zanzibar Education Act has enabled girls to return to school after childbirth, although this has not yet applied to mainland Tanzania. (Moshi et al. 2023) cite some positive changes in Tanzania, referring to a new 2009 policy that was passed under the pressure of international organizations (UNICEF and Human Rights Watch) to allow pregnant students to sit for national examinations in primary and secondary schools, as well as new guidelines and principles which supporting young mothers to return to school after childbearing. Three main issues highlighted by the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Vocational Training when investigating adolescent teenage pregnancy and education are helping young mothers to adopt new curriculums after returning to school, which school to be readmitted to, and child care, In a real sense, the readmission of pregnant students and young mothers remains a complicated and controversial issue in most schools despite the government's authorization since some of the school headmasters and headmistresses are against accepting young mothers to return to their schools. Also, community perceptions account for school administrators' actions because of their beliefs that many students in the schools will become pregnant because of the influences of peers who have given birth, leading to current conflicts between schools and the community. Individuals against the idea of young mothers returning to school often base their attitudes on how inappropriate it is for them to be in the classroom as punishment for violating gendered expectations of being abstinent. (Mpimbi et al. 2022) Various efforts have been taken by the Tanzania government to find a solution to the problem of early pregnancy among secondary school students but the problem still exists and has a huge effect on the student's future life.

### Research Questions

A research question is a question that a research project sets out to answer. Choosing a research question is an essential element of both quantitative and qualitative research. The research question states the specific issue or problem that the assignment will focus on. The study will be guided by the following questions:

- i. What are the causes leading to early pregnancy of secondary school students in the Dodoma region?
- ii. What are the consequences of early pregnancy school secondary students in the Dodoma region?
- iii. What are the strategies to prevent the early pregnancy problem of secondary school students in the Dodoma region?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES OF STUDENTS' EARLY PREGNANCY IN SECONDARY SCHOOL

#### **Absence of Comprehensive Sex Education**

In schools that don't provide comprehensive evidence-based sex education, kids do not get enough knowledge on contraception, reproductive health, and the risks associated with unprotected sex. Less use of contraception can result in unintended pregnancy and STDs, including HIV, as a result of comprehensive sex education not being provided to all students. reduced awareness of the gender and sexual identity spectrum as well as a rise in stigma and shame. Comparing students who received no sex education to those who did, those who received comprehensive sex education had a 60% lower reported rate of pregnancy or impregnation.

#### **Cultural and Religious Beliefs**

Schools should take into consideration the diverse cultural and religious backgrounds of their students. Students' attitudes and behaviors around sex and contraception may be influenced by their cultural and religious beliefs. Some tribes permit early marriage, coerced sex, and the decline of cultural values like puberty rites and virginity inspections are some of the factors that determine adolescent pregnancy in the Dodoma region. Some religious beliefs condemn the use of condoms and other contraceptive methods for the prevention of pregnancy, viewing the methods as sins, which encourages early pregnancy in students. A few tribes held the belief that if a daughter did not marry between the ages of 12 and 19, it would be a curse on the clan and that the daughter must purify the curse. Additionally, some cultures forbid daughters and fathers from getting together to share stories, life experiences, and struggles, which causes stress in female students and ultimately leads to them falling into men's love and becoming pregnant. A significant number of conservative Christians remained on staff and made every effort to further the Christians' agenda of sex ignorance.

#### **Insufficient Support from School**

Students involved in prostitution and other illicit activities for financial gain can lead to issues such as discrimination or social exclusion, which can negatively impact their sexual conduct and psychological well-being. Female students' inability to meet their needs and think critically in the classroom and society at large is probably going to have a detrimental impact on their academic performance. This forces students to join different organizations to get the help they need, which may lead to their involvement in illegal activities like prostitution, which can result in early pregnancy. At school, some teachers and students make sarcastic remarks that pregnant students are shielded from by supportive teachers

#### **Lack of Adequate Role Models in the Field of Education**

Lack of access to mature, informed individuals can negatively affect young people's conduct and ability to make decisions. The lack of role models in schools, particularly for female students, is a major issue because it prevents them from learning from the most intelligent women about what successful people have done in life. Because they do not understand the value of education, how to set goals, or what they can do for the future, female students continue to be ignorant. This leads to vulnerability to female students and early sexual abuse.

#### **Availability of School Electronic Devices and Internet**

The largest risk to letting social media and the internet take the role of the teacher is the accessibility of electronic devices in schools and the internet. Male and female students alike occasionally neglect their studies in favor of Hollywood productions that never discuss birth control or safe sexual relations. To persuade students to practice, they display explicit images and videos, which raises the risk of an early pregnancy. People living in historical times are engaging in unprotected sexual activity constantly with no repercussions. That is education that is freely and universally accessible to all students, using any kind of device. Teachers who allow their students to study independently using the internet and electronic devices will only instill negative values in their students.

#### **Socio-Economic Factors**

These factors could be highly significant. Economically disadvantaged schools may have higher rates of teenage pregnancy due to things like low educational attainment, limited access to healthcare, and a dearth of extracurricular activities for students to participate in. The socioeconomic factor was found to be a good measure of the neighborhood's poverty. This may encourage harmful peer pressure and leave female students open to early social independence. The absence of recreational opportunities, sexual health resources, and community taxes to involve female students in the environment also hastens the repercussions of risky sexual behavior and raises the possibility of unintended pregnancies. The decision of pregnant students to continue or stop their studies may be influenced by their academic standing. Pregnant female students' access to education and academic integration is threatened by the prevalence of female pregnancy, despite a wealth of research on its causes and effects.

#### **Stigma and Taboos**

The stigma surrounding abortion is widespread worldwide, albeit it can take different forms depending on social, legal, religious, and cultural contexts as well as personal characteristics like age, marital status, and religion. Social norms play a role in the stigma associated with abortion that women may experience when seeking or receiving one. The idea that abortion is morally wrong and socially unacceptable is known as the "abortion stigma. Although safe abortion care is hampered by social norms and stigma, which affect female students' decision-making, abortion is a common and necessary component of sexual and reproductive health care. Many female students still encounter obstacles to getting a safe abortion,

and a variety of social and cultural factors affect how they access care. Anticipating negative social consequences, such as punishment for participating in an activity that is deemed unacceptable, helps to maintain these norms. If students attend a school where discussing sex, reproductive health, or teenage pregnancy is frowned upon or stigmatized, they may be discouraged from seeking assistance or support when they need it. Inadequate Access to Contraceptives: Students who do not have access to birth control or condoms may be more likely to become pregnant unintentionally.

### **The following are the other factors from the schools contributing to students' early pregnancy**

#### **Peer Pressure**

According to Degge et al. (2022), adolescents are less likely to engage in protective sexual activity the more favorable the effects of pregnancy are to them. According to Risenga et al. (2022), girls engage in sex because they cannot withstand the pressure from their partners. They aimed to win over their lovers. This study's authors, (Bitew et al. 2023) noted that female participants consistently acknowledged peer impact. They admitted having sex and said they could not say no because they wanted to appease their partners. Additionally, they noted that college girls believed that engaging in sexual activity was a requirement for them as a means of demonstrating their love for their partners. Peer pressure was another important element that was identified at the school level. Most secondary school kids experience greater peer pressure to engage in sexual concerns. This finding is in line with that of Tladi et al. (2014) who found that peer pressure was the main reason why most adolescents reported engaging in hazardous sexual behavior. According to Rumberger et al. (2008), the majority of girls who are not in a romantic relationship are typically persuaded to do this by their peers

#### **Awareness**

Awareness has a significant impact on pregnancy among secondary school students. They mistakenly believe that being married to a wealthy man is more important than getting an education because parents and students are unaware of the value of education and how it affects society and nations in general. These results support (Mpimbi et al. 2022) assertion that, for the good of society, girls' education ought to be given more priority. More attention should be placed on ensuring that girls' education is promoted in parts of Tanzania where understanding of the value of girls' education is low.

#### **Parenting Style**

The majority of parents delegated responsibility for their children's education to instructors, therefore kids were free to follow their desires to satisfy their needs. As soon as instructors return home, parents or community members should assist them in educating their daughters rather than claiming that it is their duty. They might be able to lessen or even end the issue by doing this. According to Mgbokwere et al. (2015), the well-being of a kid is significantly impacted by the absence of education among female parents. A mother who has received formal education is more likely to impart that knowledge to her offspring, ensuring both her academic and general success. According to research by Twaweza-Uwezo in Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda in 2010, the majority of kids who did well in school were those whose mothers had college degrees. Thus, girls from less educated mothers are more likely to experience a variety of difficulties, such as dropping out of school and getting pregnant. This issue is more common in rural areas because many mothers have less education.

#### **Sexual Desire**

Some students engage in sexual relations to obtain the things they desire because they desire things they are unable to have. They see sex as a way to get money so they can buy designer clothes, have pocket money, go to concerts, or buy perfume or cell phones. As they lack capital kids desire to own all of these things. When girls become pregnant, they must drop out of school, ruining their lives (Asmamaw et al. 2023).

#### **Material Gain (Money)**

Material gain (money); nowadays motivates students to engage in sexual relations with those who have money which is one of the variables that influences pregnancy among secondary school students. The results show that there is a sizable body of evidence suggesting that lower socioeconomic position and poverty of their families were some of the most consistent risk factors impacting student pregnancy among secondary school students. This is consistent with several research carried out in both industrialized and developing nations. Indicates that the majority of pregnant students are more likely to have come from low-income families, and less-advantageous social environments, (Corcoran, 2016).

#### **Role Played by The Media**

Media which serves as a source of information has an impact on student pregnancy as well since it promotes the idea that boys and girls socialize differently based on their sexual orientation. Few parents talk to their kids about how the media portrays and values sexuality. Teenage students converse with their peers for hours on end and frequently avoid talking to their parents at all. According to Mgbokwere et al. (2015), teens who have poor parent-child communication or who are exposed to a sexual atmosphere through the media are more likely to become pregnant unintentionally. As one of the elements determining pregnancy, information sources also play a significant influence. Most students today enjoy watching porn, staying up late with buddies, and reading unethical magazines and newspapers. Teenagers who were more exposed to sexuality in the media were also more likely to participate in sexual activity, according to a Nigerian study by Omi and Oluwafemi in 2002.

### **Effects of Secondary School Students' Pregnancy in school and society**

Student pregnancy can have significant negative effects on young mothers and their children by limiting their educational

success and financial stability and increasing their risk of becoming single parents and experiencing marital instability in the future. Philemon, (2009), (and Mbelwa et al. 2012) students become mothers without the knowledge, skills, resources, and networks needed to handle the responsibilities of parenthood, "the price of student pregnancy is potentially lost (Chuwa, 2023).

### **Street Children**

The causes of street children are quite specific to each situation. However, there are several complex reasons why children end up living on the streets, including parental poverty, parental neglect, family disintegration, the passing of one or both parents to HIV/AIDS or other common diseases, and verbal, physical, and sexual abuse. Therefore, one of the repercussions of pregnancy among secondary school students is a rise in the number of street children.

### **Poverty**

Early motherhood may not always result in poverty, but it can certainly make young women's financial circumstances worse. Teen mothers are more likely than their peers to receive child welfare for a longer amount of time due to their poorer earning potential. Furthermore, our results confirm the findings of (Odimegwu et al. 2016) that the majority of young women from low-income families engage in sex trades for cash or presents. As it was shown from the study that poverty has an impact on students, the combination of being poor and existing in a more unequal and immobile society contributes to a low perception of potential financial success which in turn influences decisions that favor short-term pleasure. In this instance, the choice to become a parent is made.

### **Diseases (Illness)**

The health hazards connected to student pregnancy, while some studies contend that student pregnancies before the age of 19 have more health hazards than pregnancies at older ages, others contend that the greatest danger if any is for pregnancies in younger years (Zulaika et al. 2022). Cephalo-pelvic disproportion, toxemia, hypertension, urethral fistulas, and placental abruption are risks connected to physiological immaturity (Amoo et al. 2018). According to projections made by UNFPA in 2007, women between the ages of 15 and 19 are twice as likely to die after giving birth as those between the ages of 20 and 24. Around the world, problems associated with pregnancy and childbirth cause up to 70,000 deaths per year in girls between the ages of 15 and 19.

### **Measures that should be taken to Reduce or Prevent Students Pregnancies**

It is simpler and more affordable to assist young students in avoiding early pregnancy and childbearing than to handle all of the issues that arise once the babies are born. The goal of the study was to determine various steps that could be implemented to lessen or end student pregnancies among secondary school students. They consist of the following:

Sexual health education should be made mandatory for students as part of the school curriculum in the form of life skills. Parents must participate in seminars on sex education, contribute to the creation of the school's sexual education policy, and give students access to sufficient resources (Farb et al. 2016). Students' decisions regarding sex can be greatly influenced by the type and quality of interactions they have with their parents. Less sex is likely to occur among students whose parents offered a pleasant, loving, and supportive atmosphere. To reduce the high rate of unintended pregnancies among students, parents should support, be close to, and be friendly to their teens.

To address teenage pregnancies, the community and school administration should work together with government agencies. Government agencies should demonstrate their strength in this area to combat pregnancy. Additionally, they should not take bribes from people who force students to become pregnant.

A hostel for students who live far from schools should be created. Programs to prevent pregnancy among secondary school students must be sensitive to teenagers' developmental needs and life settings. This means that the neighborhood should be involved in school improvement initiatives, such as working with the government to ensure that hostels are built for students who live a long way from school and whose families are extremely impoverished.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The Research design comprises a description of the researcher's process, from developing the hypothesis and considering its operational implications to conducting the final data analysis. To acquire data for this study, a cross-sectional survey approach will be used. Cross-sectional surveys focus primarily on describing events as they take place.

### **Research Setting**

The study was carried out in the Dodoma Region in Dodoma District. One of the seven districts of the Dodoma region is the Dodoma district (Dodoma Municipal Council). Mpwapwa, Kondoa, Chamwino, Chemba, Bahi, and Kongwa are other districts. It shares borders with the Bahi District to the west, the Chamwino District to the east, the Kondoa District to the north, and the Iringa Region to the south.

### **Research Population**

The population targeted for this study involved both men and women from age 13-19 for students, 20 and above for both parents and teachers in the Dodoma district in Dodoma region.



**Sample Size and Sampling Techniques**

A sample size of 120 people in the Dodoma district was selected, 77 were students, 20 parents, 20 teachers, 02 headmasters, and 01 District educational officer. This sample size with the inclusion criteria of both men and women represents the total population in the Dodoma district. Purposive sampling was adopted to enable the recruitment of people with the required characteristics for the study.

**Instruments for Data Collection.**

Questionnaires were used for data collection in this study. It also generated data for all participants who are students, teachers, and parents. Community perceptions will be considered in this study.

**Validity of Instrument**

To ensure the credibility and validity of this instrument, the researchers created the instrument to overview the variables under in-depth investigation.

**Instrument Reliability**

A test-retest reliability approach was used to evaluate the instrument's dependability. All participants, including students, teachers, and students based on age, were given the instrument. The same instrument was given to the same participants again after a week's break, and a reliability coefficient value was found.

**Methods of Data Collection**

The researcher used face-to-face methods to administer the questionnaire directly to the literate respondents. After the researcher read and interpreted the questionnaires to respondents who could not read English, the same questionnaires were used as part of a structured interview.

**Method of Data Analysis**

Data analysis was done with SPSS version 20. The test and one-way analysis of variance were used to determine the significance of the hypotheses at the level.

**Ethical Consideration**

The headmasters of Jamuhuri and City secondary schools, as well as the City Director of the Dodoma region, gave their approval for the study. Before the questionnaire was administered, each respondent's consent was also sought. Additionally, respondents received guarantees of anonymity and data confidentiality.

**Results**

Using SPSS version 20, the data were examined using frequency counts, percentages, correlation tests, and retests, and one-way analysis of variance. At the significance level of 0.05, all decisions were made. The following headings served as the organization for the content.

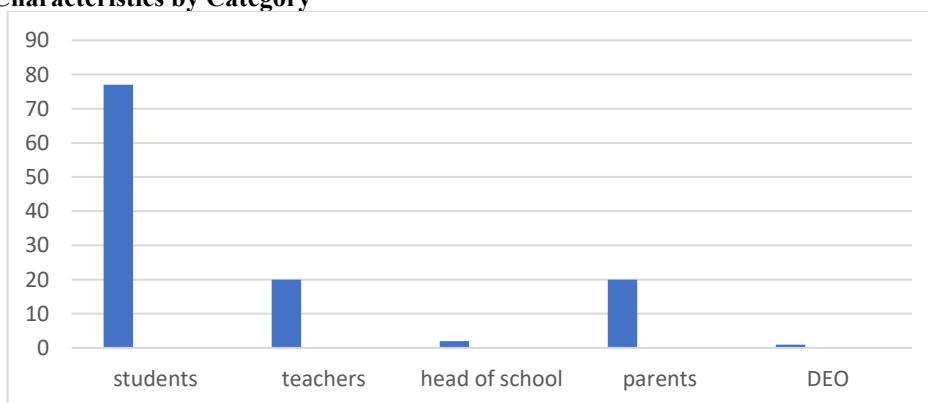
**Demographic Analysis of Samples**

The data for this study was collected from 120 participants. The demographic description of the sample was done using frequency counts and percentages.

**Demographic Characteristics of the Participants by Category**

The 120 respondents that participated are shown in Table 4.2. 77% were students, 20% were teachers, 2% were school administrators, 20% were parents, and 1% was a secondary education officer. The information required for this study could be mostly gathered from students who were the victims of different factors, including family issues and the factors that led to pregnancy, students were the majority of the sample when compared to other groups. This is demonstrated in greater detail in the following graph below.

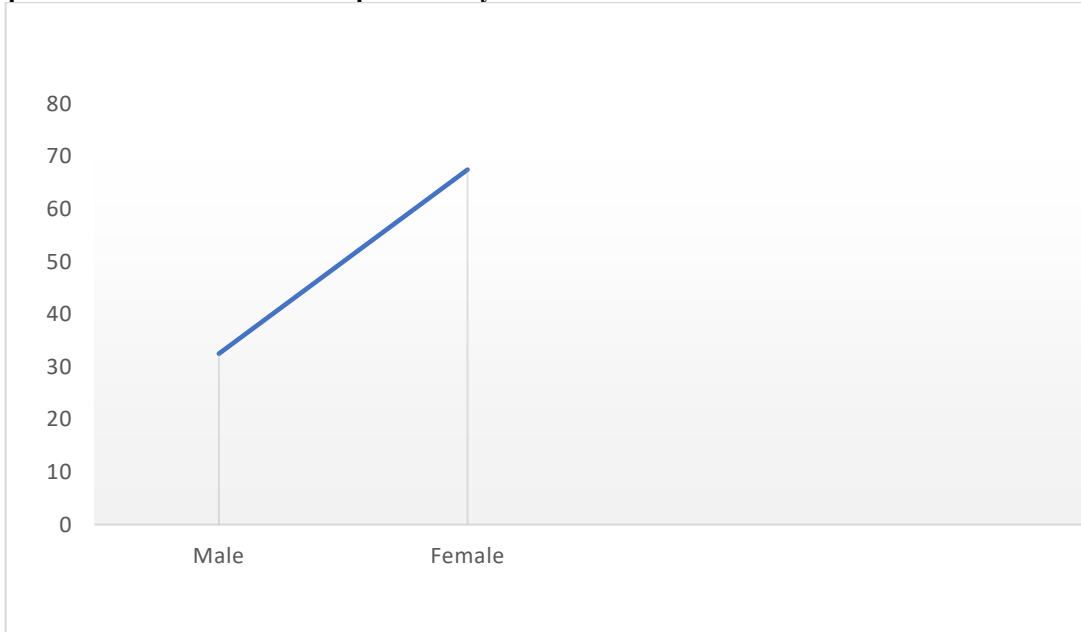
**Demographic Characteristics by Category**



**Demographic Characteristics of the Respondent by Gender**

Both males and females of both sexes participated in this study, although there were more females than males because according to 81 females are more likely to offer data from which accurate conclusions may be drawn. 50% (N=50) of the students were female, compared to 27% (N=27) of the male students. 15% (N=15) of the teachers were female, and 5% (N=5) of the teachers were male. A male head of school from school “A” was chosen at 1% (N=1), and a female head of school from school “B” was chosen at 1%(N=1). Male secondary educational officers, wards "A" and "B," and 15% (N=15) female parents and 5% (N=5) male parents were included. This is depicted in the following graph.

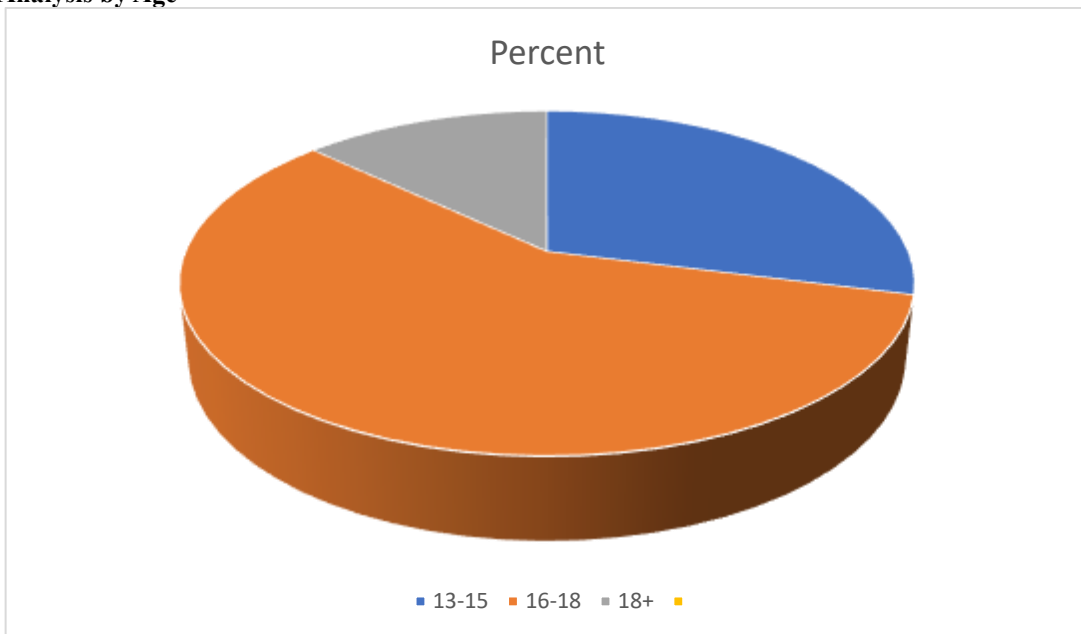
**Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents by Gender**



**Student Age Analysis**

The socio-demographic profile of the study's participants is shown below. It demonstrates that the majority, 58% (N=45), of the respondents were between the ages of 16 and 18, while 29% (N=22) were between the ages of 13 and 15, and roughly 13% (N=10), of the respondents were over the age of 18. According to the aforementioned data, the majority of respondents were of sexually active age.

**Student Analysis by Age**



**Work Experience**

According to Table 4.3 below, 23% of respondents (N = 10) had experience teaching for between two and three years, 30% (N = 13) had experience teaching for between four and six years, and 47% (N = 20) had experience teaching for six or more years. The number of years respondents had been employed by their schools was a good indication of their obligation to have the necessary knowledge and experience on matters about influencing causes, impacts, and measures on teenage

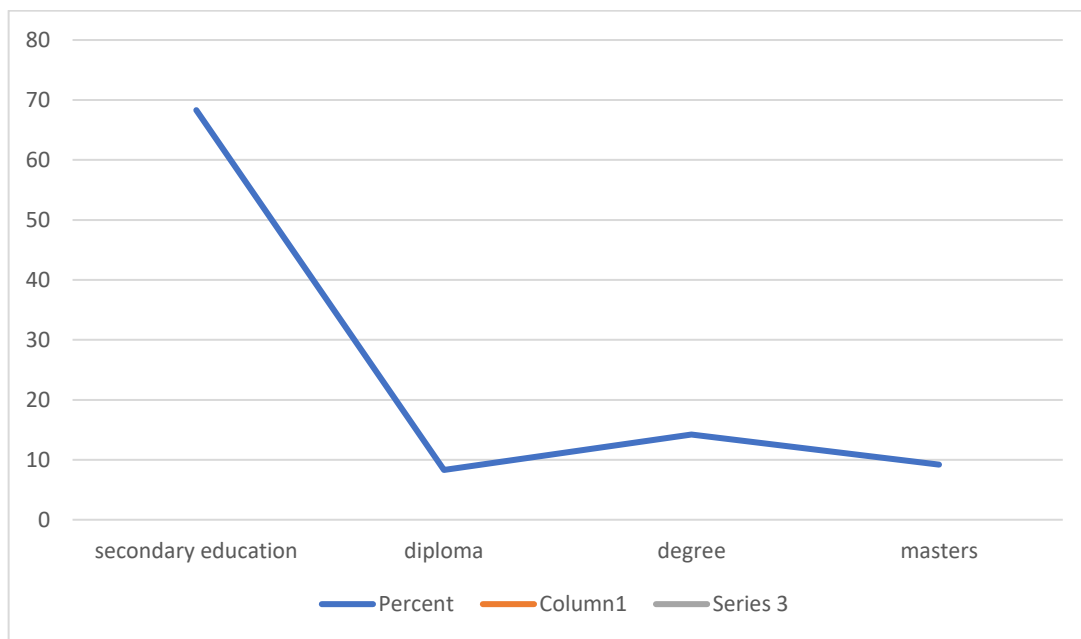
pregnancy. The table below shows the representation of the informants based on their employment history.

**Respondent working History**

Years	Frequency	Percent
2-3	10	23
4-6	13	30
6+	20	47
Total	43	100

**Demographic Characteristics of Respondents by Educational Level**

According to the information in the Figure below, there were only four groups of respondents with varying degrees of schooling. A higher percentage 68.3% (N=82) of respondents, possessed a normal secondary education. Following this category were those who held a degree which is 14.2% (N=17), a Diploma at 8.3% (N=10), and a master’s degree were 9.2%(N=11). The findings from this study show that the majority of the respondents held degrees. In the graph below, the informants' presentations are shown.

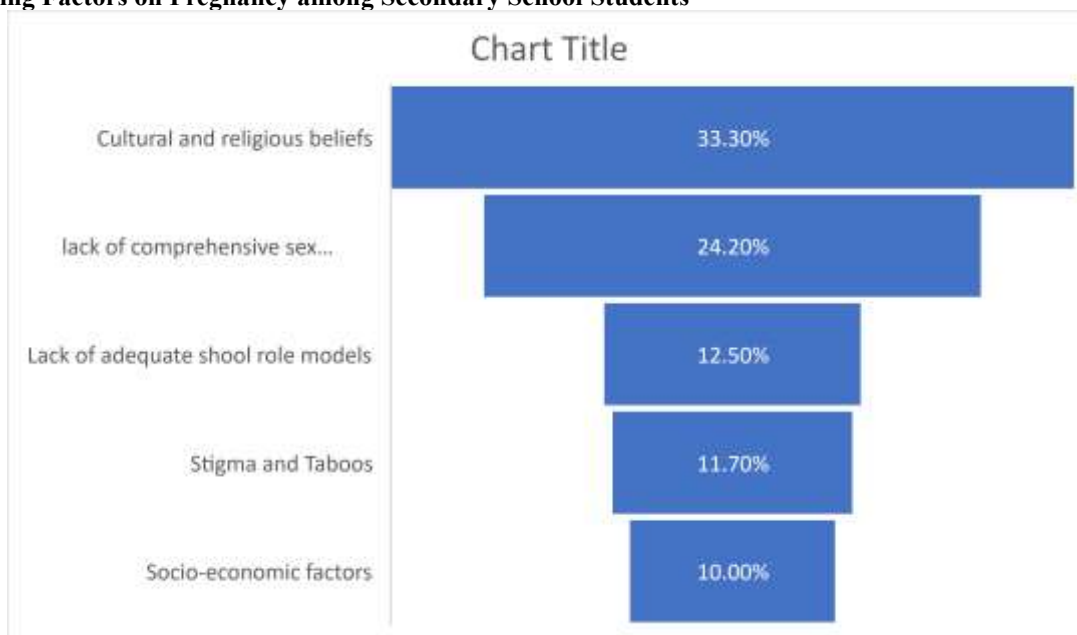


**The Influencing Factors on Pregnancy among Secondary School Students**

This goal is to identify the factors that influence pregnancy among secondary school students. Two categories of factors affect a student's pregnancy: those that occur inside the school grounds and those that occur outside of them. Teachers, students, parents, school administrators, and the district secondary educational officer all provided information for the data collection. The replies were analyzed as the following: Absence of comprehensive sex education, cultural and religious beliefs, insufficient support from schools, lack of adequate role models in the field of education, stigma, and taboos, social economic factors, family and community influence, monetary gain, parental style, peer pressure, sex desire, awareness, and media. The study's findings showed that the absence of comprehensive sex education, family, and community had a significant impact on student pregnancy. It was listed as one of the contributing variables to pregnancy among secondary school students by 24.2% (N=29) of the respondents. It was followed by cultural and religious beliefs which was cited as an influence on pregnancy by around 33.3% (N=40) of the respondents and insufficient support from schools which was cited by about 8.3% (N=10) of the respondents. Other contributing factors to pregnancy among secondary school students included lack of adequate role models which was reported by 12.5% (N=15) and socio-economic factors which was indicated by 11.7% (N=14) of respondents. Finally, 10% (N=12) of respondents claimed that stigma and taboos influenced student pregnancy. The influencing factors on pregnancy among secondary school students are shown in the figure below.



**Influencing Factors on Pregnancy among Secondary School Students**



**DISCUSSION**

Some of the parents expel the girls away, it is a shame to the family as she exposes the family to the wrong counsel and unsafe abortion. Few parents would rather support the girls to have a baby and return to school. In response, many parents become enraged and send their daughters away from home, preventing them from attending school further. Most often, fathers will send their pregnant daughters away and avoid communicating with them. The pregnant girl may experience severe psychological trauma as a result of the father's poor decision. A pregnant student's socioeconomic circumstances deteriorate, increasing the likelihood of poor health outcomes like malnutrition, insufficient medical attention that raises the risk of complications for the mother, and ultimately maternal death.

The majority of parents assert that a pregnant student who is not married is a social outcast with no future and a terrible impact on her parents; it is a reflection of their failure to fulfill their parental duties to their daughter and a mark against the girl and her family.

The street "c" parents explain that Western education is to blame for the pregnancy among their students. Since education can provide knowledge to combat ignorance that could encourage a lifestyle detrimental to teenage reproductive health, it is a crucial tool in the fight against teenage pregnancy. Predisposing factors for early sexual debut in adolescents have also been noted, including shifting cultural norms brought about by urbanization, globalization, and media influence, including the internet, as well as the disintegration of traditional coping mechanisms for managing teenage sexuality and norms of chastity before marriage.

**Conclusion**

The study's conclusions were given by each specified goal. Based on the results of the study's first objective which examined factors influencing pregnancy among secondary school students, it was discovered that material gain, peer pressure, family dynamics, awareness of the issue, media exposure, and sexual desire are the main causes of pregnancy among secondary school students in Tanzania. As a result, the study concluded that peer pressure, parental style, and material gain (money) were the main causes of student pregnancy.

**Recommendation of Actions**

Students should get health education to lessen or eliminate the problem of student pregnancy. Students under close supervision should be present.

Parents ought to have tight relationships with their girls in addition. Additionally, parents and teachers should work together to educate children while they are in school. Every day, parents should lecture their daughters on the negative impacts of pregnancy, one of which is the risk to the unborn child's future life. Teachers and parents should work together to discover girls' potential and direct girls in the proper direction. Students should have the authority to demand their rights in places where these crimes are perpetrated because the law is in existence.

Policies that permit girls who are pregnant or nursing to pursue further education ought to be created, put into place, and closely observed. Programs designed to prevent school dropouts raise the proportion of female students enrolled in school who are potentially pregnant. Pregnant students in Tanzania are not allowed to continue their education by law. The government permitted pregnant teenage girls and mothers of small children to finish their education in 2017. According to a study, girls who have never given birth have a statistically higher chance of graduating from high school by the age of 22 as young mothers, particularly students.

To avoid early and unwanted pregnancies, curriculum-based comprehensive sexuality education should be made a priority in schools both before and after puberty. At least once a week, adolescents receive counseling from a qualified professional

along with comprehensive sex education. In various national contexts, comprehensive sexuality education is useful in preventing and reducing early and unplanned pregnancies.

Schools should support interventions that address gender norms, roles, and relationships, foster gender equality, and encourage men and boys to critically evaluate normative behaviors and gender norms. According to a study, boys' gender-equitable attitudes—including a sense of shared responsibility to avoid early pregnancy—were enhanced when they received comprehensive sex education as adolescents. Pregnancy, childbirth, and sexually transmitted diseases were significantly reduced in programs that used curriculum-based approaches to address gender or power.

It is important to establish a connection between health services and schools to prevent early pregnancy and assist young mothers who decide to return to school for additional education. It is important to support and encourage school health services that are provided on-site to lower the number of early and unwanted pregnancies, provide antenatal care to assist teenagers who are pregnant or parenting and lower the rate of school dropouts. According to a review of research from various parts of Tanzania, Nigeria, and Uganda, adolescents who receive concurrent education and contraceptive promotion are less likely to become pregnant unintentionally. According to the study, female adolescents who had their teachers directly inform them about health services were more likely to take advantage of those resources and avoid becoming pregnant unintentionally.

Schools should adopt interventions to lessen discrimination and stigma against girls who are pregnant or parenting. Adolescents' educational outcomes are negatively impacted by the stigma associated with pregnant and parenting girls. According to a study done in the Katavi region, the consequences of such stigma and discriminatory attitudes toward pregnant girls and adolescent mothers include depression, self-esteem loss, isolation, and school dropout.

Sensitization seminars and counseling for girls and parents; closing pornographic establishments that let minors in; using the legal system to prosecute rapists; the president's campaign against early pregnancies; dismissing schools before dark; locally accessible schools; and creating jobs for parents so they can support their daughters financially. The construction of houses with separate rooms to support parents' privacy and the training of educators and community members in imparting empowerment and vocational skills to girls are areas where capacity building is needed.

### Recommendations for Further Studies

To examine the reasons for pregnancy in secondary school students, more research on The Influencing Factors of Pregnancy Among Secondary School Students needs to be done. The current study was only conducted in the Dodoma district's two secondary schools. It could be necessary to conduct this kind of research in Dodoma and throughout Tanzania. As a result, the study suggests that additional research be done on:

- i. An examination of the reasons behind parents' silence regarding sex education with their kids, particularly those in secondary school.
- ii. Why do the parents and their female students have such a bad relationship?
- iii. The impact of child support grants on secondary school students' pregnancy.
- iv. How to modify the Life Orientation curriculum to better address the issue of pregnancy among secondary school students

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