

# The Role of Parents in Family and Sex Education for Development: With special Reference to Tanzania

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## INTRODUCTION

*Giving birth is something in which mankind and animals are equal, but rearing the young, and especially educating them for many years is something which is a unique gift and responsibility of men. It is for this reason that it is important for human beings to put emphasis on caring for children and the ability to look after them properly, rather than thinking only about the number of children and the ability to give birth. For it often happens that men's ability to give birth is greater than their ability to bring up the children in a proper manner.*<sup>1</sup>

Traditionally, in most African countries, men and women have specific roles and functions to play in the development of their countries. Sometimes such norms and values have enabled parents, both men and women, to perform separate functions in bringing up the next generation; especially in raising them to adulthood. But it is increasingly becoming clear that the raising of children in African societies should equally be shared by both men and women, considering the economic capabilities of the parents. President Nyerere (1979) aired similar views when introducing the Second Five Year Development Plan, in which he amplified parents' role in family life education. The responsibility of giving birth by Tanzanians or others implies (1) that giving birth is a shared responsibility between father and mother and other related individuals in case of African families; (2) that the totality of raising, caring and educating children in all walks of life, including customs, norms, values, attitudes, skills, formal or non-formal education, and family and sex education, is a parental role and function; and (3) that parents should plan and space children to enable them to provide the best rearing available and enhance communication between parents and children within the society.

This paper defines the terms, family and sex education, as related to parental role and discusses the importance of family and sex education as well as the role that could be played by the parents and other adults in the preparation of youths into adulthood for future development. The paper further discusses the application of family and sex education in Tanzania and how parents in particular could enhance the teaching of this education in schools. It also deals with factors which contribute to the slowness of adapting the education in the school educational system. The paper provides examples of how other African countries, like Kenya and Ghana, have managed to introduce family and sex education by involving parents and adults in their programmes. In so doing, the adults, and parents in particular, have managed to live up to their golden responsibilities in bringing up the youths to adulthood as future parents who will control and direct their own destiny and environment.

## **Definitions of Family and Sex Education**

For purposes of this paper, family life education should be defined in the context of the expected target within a society. Family life Education is a continuous learning process which starts in the home where family members act as models on human relations and human interactions. It deals with giving family members the aptitudes and knowledge necessary to fulfil their roles both in the family and in society, while developing harmonious relationships directed towards a balanced relationship between family and society in order to improve the quality of family life, in which parents play a significant role. This definition is linked to Family Planning Education which deals with making people, parents included, aware of the relationships between family size and quality of family life by showing them how they can plan the family in a rational and realistic way, taking into account financial and material resources of the family including their health. Family Education and Family Planning Education are both connected and linked to sex education.

Sex Education, specifically, is a continuous learning process among the peoples in societies taught within acceptable customs, values and norms of a particular society. Sex education deals with developing in children and adults an understanding of their own sexual nature and needs, of changing sex roles and of the place of sex in the individual's personal and family life, for the individuals to make responsible decisions in regard to sexual behaviour.

## **The Importance of Family and Sex Education**

Family and sex education should be undertaken as combined forces and factors contributive to the development of any society, and in particular to a developing country like Tanzania in which the youths are looked upon as the future parents and, therefore, developmental forces for the society. If family and sex education are provided for a society, and in particular for the parents, they would enhance the practice of family planning which is important in the development of any country. The importance of family and sex education in development is seen in the sense that family planning effectiveness results in a lowering of the birth rates and, most likely, fertility decline. The World Population Plan of Action, adopted by the Bucharest Conference in 1974, saw the importance of family education and planning as a basic human right and maintained that:

*All couples and individuals have the basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have the information, education and means to do so, the responsibility of couples and individuals in the exercise of this right takes into account the needs of their living and future children, and their responsibilities toward the community.*

The importance of family and sex education through family planning is seen to be the role of the parents towards the needs of their own living and future children. It has positive influence on the health of mothers and their children, and thus on the entire family. Family and sex education contribute to family health, to the mental and social well-being of mothers, fathers and their children by enabling parents to achieve their reproductive objectives and at the same time, have control over their pattern and direction of their lives and, in so doing, positively contributing to a healthy society for development. Family and sex education help to eliminate the health hazards associated with close

pregnancies, and therefore prevent most unwanted pregnancies. In Tanzania, if family and sex education are extended, to the rural communities, they can contribute towards freeing women from unwanted fertility and thus promote their physical health and out-reach beyond traditional roles. This would enhance their own sense of social and psychological well-being and the contribution they make to the well-being of their families, villages and communities. Family and sex education are important because they enable parents to view them as a health education, not only for themselves, but also for their children's future development.

Traditionally, Tanzanian youths were prepared for the responsibilities of family life, including sex education, through initiation ceremonies at puberty. Many of these customs have been abandoned and no adequate substitute has been provided. In schools, the preparation of youths for responsible parenthood is totally ignored and one result is pregnancies among primary school girls. The family and sex education to be provided should be for different targets as indicated in the definition. For example, out-of-school youths should be the focus, on the assumption that, they are the base of future families. A family life education for this target group may deal with topics like history and behaviour of a family, responsible sexual behaviour, parental responsibilities on employment, migration to the city, family planning practices, nutrition and health care. Family life education may also take different forms depending on the priorities of a particular country. It deals with a unit (family) which influences and is influenced by the large society in which it exists. And for family life education to be successful, the parents are essential for the process of rearing the children and youths into a grown-up society of responsible parents.

The concept of family life education is not new to many parents, and perhaps the name is derived from traditional societies in which the parents play a vital role in educating the children of a particular ethnic group about various ways of life. Children were taught by adults of the same clan, village or community. These societies used the socialisation process which involved adults teaching children about adulthood. This kind of family education was functional and important since it taught the young the needed knowledge, technical skills, physical skills, social and cultural skills necessary to make them a part of the expected future society. Among the specific subjects taught in the traditional system by the parents, were, sex education and the process of giving birth and rearing children. But it should be noted that the introduction of western education and religions forced family education to become private and individual matters, and this also changed its importance, Vriesendorp<sup>5</sup>, emphasising the changing pattern of family education through foreign institutions, stated:

*Family life suddenly became some sort of holy institution in which reproduction was to take place in the strict intimacy of the conjugal bed, not to be discussed outside the bed. The only events which were still public were marriage celebrations, births and deaths. Whatever happened in between was considered strictly private. A distance was being created between parents and children based on the philosophy that children are innocent creatures not to be spoiled by the knowledge of the "facts of life" and who should certainly not to be bothered with the hard realities and responsibilities of married life before it was considered their time. Responsible parenthood became something to be prepared for. Family life education (including sex education) gradually disappeared from the scene as something unnatural and unnecessary.*

The western attitude of individualism, as opposed to the African traditional life based on collectivism widened the gap between parents and their children who received less preparation for adulthood. It is increasingly necessary that schools and youth organisations should be made the appropriate institutions for providing family life education, as well as sex education, by involving the parents, as was the case before colonialism. Family life education content depends on the social-cultural setting and the economic realities of a country, and this has been taken into account by some African countries which have attempted to implement family life education. Two of these African countries are Kenya and Ghana.

Kenya is recorded to have been the first country in sub-saharan Africa which expressed the need to curb the country's population growth in her first five-year plan (1965-1970). Kenya instituted a national programme in 1967 which catered for family life education, issues on environment and international awareness. In 1972, the Christian Council of Kenya set up a programme to deal with the preparation of young persons into adulthood responsibilities, by involving parents. The issues covered in that programme included human sexuality, reproduction, contraception and the impact of family size on individuals and society. The programme was expected to help the youths, the future parents in the society, to be able to identify and develop values for interaction and communication within the society. The programme was also expected to reduce anxiety, fallacies and fears of sexual relations so as to accommodate emotional, physical and social factors that influence sexual responsibilities. The programme also included discussion groups for parents on the assumption that they would use the knowledge obtained in bringing up their children.

Ghana on the other hand, is one of the African countries in the sub-saharan region, with a national policy on population education which is implemented through education programmes. The National Family Planning Programme, in conjunction with the Ghana Home Science Association, provides educational programmes, on family planning as well as family life education. Several workshops have been organised to train and bring awareness to the teachers involved in teaching family education. Vriesendorp<sup>6</sup> (1980), emphasising this point, stated:

*The emphasis of this workshop was both on the development of awareness of the need and the approach to teaching family life at middle school and teacher training levels. The participants developed two teaching units, one on the family, and another on the teenager in the family for use within the age group of 12-17 years.*

Thus, Kenya and Ghana have identified the role of parents in family life education, as well as the use of schools, involving the teachers, parents and students and evaluating and participating in programmes through informal feedback. Other African countries that have taken interest and some action include Ivory Coast, Senegal, Togo, Nigeria, Mali, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Botswana, Swaziland, Somalia, Zambia and Tanzania.

### **Parental and School Roles in Family Life and Sex Education**

African families once lived and worked together, with parents having outstanding responsibilities in the raising of children, the boys were trained in man-

ish functions and the girls in domestic responsibilities. The father was the overall chief executive administrator and a specialist in boys' practical training, the mother was the specialist in domestic science and in training the girls. Both father and mother at one time or another had to teach family and sex education. Therefore, for complete education and for the purposes of making our educational institutions graduates competent and functional individuals in Tanzania, family and sex education should be provided as part of the complete package of education as outlined in Education for Self-Reliance.

The study, "Socio-Cultural Case Study for Population Education in Tanzania", by Omari and Sumra (1980) showed that the climate for offering sex education under the umbrella of population education exists in Tanzania, albeit unwillingly. If the Ministry of Education was to utilise the existing conducive climate by introducing sex education in the Tanzanian schools, the following factors should be taken into consideration: (1) Some teachers in the schools still hold to the old traditional norms and cultural values in teaching sex education as a subject matter in schools. Therefore, politicising of these teachers would be necessary. (2) Sex education in terms of contents and curriculum should be taught in relation to health and religious studies. And whatever curriculum is accepted should include the societal norms and values, and (3) Since there is a strong preference by parents that such sensitive sex topics be taught to boys and girls separately, a compromise should be reached as to offer the same content to all students at the same time. However, this author contends that it would be extremely difficult to teach sex education without first re-educating the Tanzanian adults as well as the parents. For sex education is an issue that concerns parents and the society at large, since it involves changing the traditional customs and beliefs which contribute to the parents' resistance to the introduction of sex education in schools. It raises parental concerns, and of other groups like religious sects of various denominations in the society, since it becomes a question of morality and ethics. Yet, the major concern should be about the youths in primary and secondary schools, whose ages range from 14 to 21, who are the next generation. Every culture, including the Tanzanian one, has its moral code and children are brought up to believe that certain things are right or wrong, good or evil. This is the acceptable way to behave, and what is expected by people, and that is the morality of the culture, whatever it may be. If youths or anybody else breaks this code, then society can judge them immoral. For example, the Omari and Sumra study in Zanzibar, indicated that parents prefer to have sex education taught to boys and girls separately so that the moral code can protect the youths. This belief is based on the assumption that if the students were taught together, the boys would spoil the girls. This author sees the possibility of a compromise between parents and the authorities if sex education is taught at secondary school level in Tanzania, provided that parents are sensitised through their political party and other institutions.

If the parents are to change the already — set attitudes to human sexuality, then a dialogue through political adult education and family education must be established at their closest focal points — the primary schools. This process could enable parents to talk with their children and youths about sex in a non-judgemental way and at the same time reduce internal tensions within parents, which, psychologists like Freud and Butts claim, is the parent's fear to admit before their children, that sex is a marvellous, creative, varied, tremendous and wonderful experience. It is within this context that parents refuse to provide sex education to their children, because it imposes too great a burden on

parent-child relationship. If the parents decline to provide the basic sex education at home, where can the children get information and answers on sex education? Awareness of how the young human being can be helped to develop into manhood or womanhood is as essential a part of reproductive biology and sex education, as any other education necessary for life, whose basis the parents can contribute to while bringing children to adulthood. If this is done in the proper manner by the parents, it would ease their concern about what companions their children have, about the use of leisure time, impact of the community or environment. It is common knowledge that in many homes the parents are unable to deal with even the facts of where babies come from or the biological materials.

In the case of Tanzania, while the Party may provide political dialogue to the adults and parents, primary, secondary schools and institutions of higher learning, through political or educational forum and discussions could create awareness and participation in this matter in the country. The Ministry of Education, in conjunction with the Ministry of Health and the Association of Tanzania Family Planning (UMATI), can work on politicising the adults and parents so as to change their attitudes toward the education which is necessary for the youth development. It is understood that UMATI has started working on this through seminars to political leaders but there is need to extend such needed services village and all levels in Tanzania for parents.

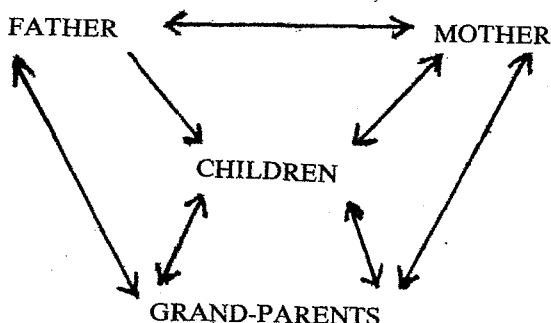
It should be noted that children learn about their bodies themselves and they are motivated to learn about sex education, as Freud theorised, and that such attempts should be aided by parents at home, first, then extended into the schools curriculum and the society at large. The family education at village level could include sensitising families on living conditions, water supply, sanitary services, malnutrition, social services, food storage, functional literacy and other items selected by villagers themselves, including sex education.

The children learn best when they learn what real people (parents) say and do. According to Dr. Butts, there are eleven factors that either our children do better today, or we parents attempt not to do to help them for their growth. These factors are: (1) Children learn more today than we did as youngsters some years ago; (2) Children today learn more from what they see on the street directly than what they read about in the classrooms; (3) All children imitate others, indeed this is how we all learn. However, parents need to surround the children or youths with good and exciting choices of sex education materials because they (children) will encounter harmful and exciting lessons on the street; (4) In most cases, parents hide sexual feelings and values from children, instead of finding ways of expressing them honestly and openly in conversation; (5) Yet, many of our children learn these behaviours through cinema, newspapers, books, media (radio music) and peer groups; (7) Most parents do the best they can to hide that they themselves have sexual desires and needs, while the children know this; (8) The most sensitive sex organ we have is not between the legs, but lies between the ears. It should be noted over-and-over again that children are being educated about sex education with or without parental consent; (9) There is no ideal or proper time for parents to impart sex education, we do it all the time, whether we realise it or not; (10) It is true that parents hesitate and are embarrassed when children ask about sex-related matters, but let us remember that youngsters have their own urges, passions and feelings, and (11) It should be possible for parents to remember their own youth, unresolved impulses, sexual fantasies; and share these with their children at the appropriate

time since these can be great resources for understanding life.\*

If all this could be done by the adults and the parents, it would aid tremendously their own experiences and understanding of normal life for the bringing up of their own children, and the children would greatly benefit from that learning experience. Sex education is based on the same principles which characterise the learning process in general. It is understandable that we learn best when the material is personal, immediate and positively reinforced. Anything that is personal or which involves our bodies is learned quickly, because we are involved personally. Each one of us was taught by surrounding older people how to become socialised human beings, as shown in Chart 1. We learnt because their interaction with us affected each one of us personally and made lasting impressions. The old, traditional learning process indicated by arrows could somehow be modified to suit a present sex education curriculum in schools.

**CHART 1: Learning process between Parents and Children in Family and Sex Education**



What happens to our children now is more important perhaps than what happened yesterday, or will happen tomorrow. Thoughts and fantasies of a sexual nature are quite natural and reflect our ability to think in the abstract and to make free associations. This is what other educators have called natural intelligence. If the children lacked this, they would not be able to imagine the past or the future. Sex education is one source of learning because it teaches that the body is wholesome, that sex is an integral part of life, and that how we go about expressing sexual feelings should be consistent with society. Experience, observation and experiments in life indicate that rewards produce better results than do punishments, so children and youths can learn better and more effectively with the aid of parents. For example, the baby at about 2-4 months of age begins to regard his/her hand with great interest, which is a sign of intellectual development and also of motor control. It is then a matter of time before any normal child or baby learns or discovers the genitals, and that they belong to self. Therefore, it is quite natural for a baby to touch the genitals, but unfortunately, this spontaneous behaviour annoys parents, not to mention grandparents. As a result parents become anxious and interfere with the

baby's natural curiosity. Some parents go to the extent of punishing the baby for touching his/her own genitals.<sup>9</sup> Positive understanding of sex education by parents can contribute to better parenthood, especially if provided in schools this time in Tanzania, where evidence exists that the government realizes the fundamental importance of family and sex education in the society. For example, the office of the Prime Minister has an internationally supported project on that subject, whose members of the Executive Committee, represent the Ministries of Agriculture, Health, Education and Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare. It is true that the government recognises the responsibilities of the families and communities in terms of family size, intervals between births, infant and maternal mortality, rural-urban migration and responsible parenthood. The government's attempts to undertake family life matters as integral part of its social and economic programmes are obvious in the family life education project under the supervision of the Prime Minister's office. This author contends that such a project or programme by the government should be designed to include sex education for schools and adults, towards the improvement of the quality of life of those individuals born in the society, with special attention to those in the rural areas where developments seem to be slow. The project in the Prime Minister's Office, includes Human Growth and Development, Family Health, Family and Responsible Parenthood and Family Management.

The concept of sex education is not well understood by many parents and therefore, parents often view the mention of sex education with suspicion. It is the contention of this author that the right time to introduce sex education should be at primary level with the co-operation of the parents and their involvement in designing the curriculum based on community and self-reliance education. It should be noted that teaching sex education will not in itself solve the problems facing the youths today. Issues such as school girl pregnancies do not necessarily occur because of lack of sex education in schools. It is important that, for the success of sex education, parents' attitudes should first be dealt with, through the Party's policy and programmes in Tanzania so that such programmes can be accepted in schools by the teachers and parents. Party and religious leaders should be involved and their support must be sought for sex education to succeed. For, a child learns much from his/her parents: their attitudes toward one another and their willingness or reluctance to discuss matters pertaining to sex in an open manner without embarrassment. It should then be deduced that parental attitudes toward sex are reflected in the behaviour and reactions of their children.

Sex is usually used to refer to the genital organs and the activities in which they are involved, especially the production of children. But sex involves much more than reproduction. Sex, or sexuality, involves one's entire personality. It involves the identification of a person with a gender (males as distinguished from females), and with such an identification, a person develops feelings, attitudes, and behaviours that are appropriate for that sex. He or she will influence and be influenced by everyone with whom he or she comes into contact socially. That association will determine one's life-style of living, one's feelings and reactions to others of their own or the opposite sex. The issue here is the involvement of the entire person, a function that could best be done by the pattern of sexual development in children, so that they could positively enhance the growing of children in all matters under parent's supervision and control; this would reduce tensions between children and parents in sexual matters.

While it is not the purpose of this paper to analyse early sexual develop-



ment in children, it may suffice to point to the work of Freud who believed that the parent was more than merely a model for the initiation of appropriate sexual behaviour. Freud believed that identification rather than imitation was likely to occur, for identification involves the acquisition of many aspects of the model's personality and eventual development into a super-ego. He theorised that excessive frustration of sexual needs at any time in the three stages of development could result in fixation at that stage of regression into an earlier psychological state and that this accounted for most adult neuroses. His sexual development states are shown in Table 1.

**Table1: Stages in Sexual Development, According to Freudian Theory<sup>10</sup>**

STAGE	AGE	Characteristic Activities
Oral	Birth to One Year	Pleasurable activities involve the mouth (suckling, eating, chewing, biting)
Anal Stage	One Year to Three Years	Pleasure centres about retention and exclusion of wastes. Proper toilet training should be neither too permissive nor too strict
Phallic stage	Three years to Six Years	Pleasure centres about genital organs. Oedipus complex and castration anxiety develop in males, electra complex and penis envy in females.
Latency Period	Six years plus	Oedipal and electal complexes are resolved, child identifies with parent of the same sex. Erotic impulses toward opposite sex repressed.
Genital Stage	Adolescence	Heterosexual love and sexuality develop replacing egocentric love. Sex drives are channelled into group activities and preparation for work and marriage.

Source:<sup>10</sup> Table 1 is modified from *Life and Health*, 1972 CRM. Inc. and cited in an article: *The Development of Human Sexuality*, University of Chicago: Population Workshop, 1979

Few psychologists today accept all of Freud's views and opinions, but many have accepted the general concept of identification. Two concepts associated with identification can be briefly summarised here. (i) *Socialisation learning*: This concept emphasises the importance of learning and intends to explain sex role development in the sense that children come to behave in appropriate sexual ways because they are actively taught to do so by their parents, siblings, peers, teachers and the mass media. In Tanzania, as in many countries, societies give to boys boyish names, dress and encourage them to act as boys during which process they are taught sports, aggressiveness and not to cry like girls but to act like fathers. All children learn appropriate sexual behaviour by observing models and imitating the parents of the same sex, and with whom the children can identify and who assumes a role of primary importance. (ii) The second concept is the *Cognitive Development*,<sup>17</sup> in which children want rewards and that when they are rewarded for doing things appropriate to their sex, then they want to be of that sex.

What the two theories imply is that psychosexual development occurs over a period of time and is not the result of a single sexual event, but many. Parents and teachers should know about these events to enable them to identify the essential growth sex-developmental stages. For instance, when children approach puberty, the period during which the reproductive organs become functional, marked physical and emotional changes occur. These changes are indicative of the maturational progress taking place as the child is developing into an adult. In girls, the most obvious physical changes are in the breasts, which begin to enlarge, height increases, pubic hair makes its appearance, the first menstruation occurs, and axillary hair begins to grow. Comparable changes occur in boys, the penis and testes increase in size, pubic hair makes its appearance, the voice begins to change, the first ejaculations occur, axillary hair and the beard grow. In both, ejaculations occur, axillary hair and the beard grow. In both sexes there is the development of sexual feelings and longings and their interest in individuals of the same sex is replaced by interest in the opposite sex.<sup>18</sup> Such signs and symptoms make sex education desirable at the age 14-17. In the case of Tanzania, this age bracket covers the primary and secondary pupils. Most primary pupils, and those of lower age groups live with parents at home, who can play an outstanding role in teaching the youths family and sex education for development. For example, at the village level, adult and community education could be utilised through the village council whose (CCM) leaders — the Chairman and Secretary would become the educators through mobilisation of the parents and other persons; arrange for community meetings at the village focal point; (which is the primary school as stipulated in the adult education policy). Other institutions like TAPA, CCT, BAKWATA, CCM Youth Organization, UWT Extension Officers and the Tanzania Episcopal Council could be involved in re-training and bringing up the future Tanzania's adults in development. In other words, family and sex education become a co-operative venture at village and cell levels through government and Party organs.

### **Application In the Tanzania Context**

The family life education in Tanzania is provided by the Family Planning Association of Tanzania, a voluntary organisation officially registered under the country's society ordinance. The association co-operates with the Ministry of Health under a directive issued by the Ministry which advises all Regional Medical Officers to provide family planning services in government hospitals in their regions where there is need. The National Family Planning Association of Tanzania provides the supplies of contraceptives and undertakes the training of the medical and paramedical personnel to run family planning service as part of the maternal and child welfare services which are conducted at their respective hospitals. It is represented in the National Council for Social Welfare and in the National Culture and Welfare Committee of the ruling party, CCM. Among the functions, the association does, is that of providing education for leaders of opinions in an attempt to get their support. These include policy makers, party leaders, leaders of institutions, rural leaders as well as married couples. The association maintains old clinics and establishes new ones which provide contraceptives to the clients in government and voluntary agency hospitals and other medical units. It is charged with a responsibility to ensure that contraceptives used in Tanzania are the most acceptable, effective, economical, safe and suitable for Tanzanians, particularly those in the rural areas.<sup>12</sup>

It is, therefore, the contention of the author of this paper that if the future citizens of Tanzania are going to be child-spacing parents, there is need to teach the young ones about population education for development. The future parents should know the factors leading to the increase and expansion of a country's population and its social, economic and educational effects on the society. Since the purpose of this paper is not to deal with population related matters, it is sufficient to note that, in Africa, about 44 per cent of all children are under the age of 15, among them 18 per cent are under the age of five and 3.5 per cent less than one year old. The implication of this is that, if Africa wants to have healthy and productive men and women by the end of the century, parents must create conditions and know-how of adulthood, acceptable to all, with full community participation, implying the responsibility of adult parents.<sup>13</sup> If health measures are taken to improve children's health it is most likely Tanzania's population could increase. Evidence suggests that population growth is likely to continue, but with the Tanzanian government's determination to improve health measures, mortality rates, especially infant mortality rate may gradually decline. The decline of the mortality rate will increase the population<sup>14</sup> and the parents have a role to play in reducing this tendency. In a rapidly growing population, a large proportion of it usually are children, and it should be noted that children, like old people, are basically consumers of food, clothing, housing, education and other social services. Thus, Tanzania has to use a large share of its resources for supporting a dependent population.<sup>15</sup> The implication of this is that such resources cannot be spent on creating new jobs, building roads, modernising agriculture and expansion of industries. Since there is evidence that Tanzania, through UMATI, provides family life education to parents, then such services could be extended to educational institutions which could cater for the future adults with the collaboration of the present adult parent population. The institutions and parents could work together on life education covering sex education and related matters that affect Tanzania, now and in future. The Tanzania government under the political party (CCM), has, through policy statements and other directives, realised the importance and application of family life and sex education for development. For example, the Party Chairman, during the International (and Tanzania) Year of the Child (1979-1980), stressed several factors: (1) That the government intended to build extra MCH clinics, since the party and government would like to have strong children, who are the successors of the present generation and are the dependable force for building the Tanzania of tomorrow. (2) That family planning should be stressed, in terms of the need for child spacing as an important factor in promoting the health of the children and adult mothers; (3) That Tanzanians should continue to observe personal and environmental hygiene so as to ensure good health for the children and the adults themselves; and (4) The Government supports the Family Planning Association of Tanzania (UMATI), through the Ministry of Health by making available contraceptive supplies and training medical and paramedical personnel within the MCH programme in family planning.<sup>16</sup> This has been the political application of family and sex education in terms of principles, whose actualisation would result in curriculum for such programmes.

Another way of discovering adults attitudes toward the introduction and application of family and sex education has been through research on parental reactions which, as shown in the study by I.M. Omari and S.A. Sumra<sup>17</sup> on "Social-Cultural Case Study for Population Education in Tanzania", supports

the government's efforts and views on health, education, rural education orientation, and also by looking at the possibility of teaching sex education. However, it should be noted that the question of sex education in educational institutions is partly an issue of changing attitudes and is not an easy matter to deal with. For Omari and Sumra discovered that, "discussion of such topics as sex and/or education between parents and young people in Zanzibar and some parts on Tanzania mainland are forbidden by authorities and religious institutions". This finding conforms with the contention that colonialism (including its missionaries) made the issue a private one by cutting off the traditional teaching of sex education which used to be part of the initiation rites and the privileged domain of certain, specified family and community elders.<sup>18</sup> The parents in the study sample realise that sex education was taught by the adult parents to the youth on their way to adulthood. Those youngest in question could be compared to the present primary school leavers who, at the end of primary seven, are expected by society to have reached sufficient maturity to live and work in villages, where they become functional parents to whom sex education would be both desirable and appropriate.

The study also indicated the reluctance of teachers and parents in teaching or discussing matters related to sex education, even though the policy of education for self-reliance, through adult education campaigns and political education programme, has created awareness for the need and teaching of sex education. Unlike Kenya and Ghana which provide sex education in schools, Tanzania does not, even though education for Self-Reliance expresses the provision of complete education for the nation's boys and girls. It is argued that "we should determine the type of things taught in the primary schools by the things which the boy or girl ought to know, that is, the skills to acquire and the values to cherish if he or she is to live happily and well in a socialist and predominantly rural society and to contribute to the improvement of life there".<sup>19</sup> Lack of complete education for Tanzanian youths has shown unfavourable results based on several factors. Two of these include lack of parental control on children at home and girl's pregnancies in schools, for which sex education is not a preventive measure. Through observations of Tanzania families, it can be deduced that parents do not entertain sex discussions with their own children since this could be embarrassing because of societal norms and values.

This trend has left a lot of young girls, often school girls, without the necessary education for preventive measures and a good number of them drop out of schools because of pregnancies. There are other cases that could be cited indicating lack of sex education as a cause for dropping out. Mwampeta, in his paper "Experiences in the Implementation of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in Tanzania", argues that in 1976 the Ministry of Education (ME) enrolled 15,155 students in UPE, but by the end of March 1979—1,654 students had dropped out, which is about 11 per cent. In 1977, students had decreased from 15,000 to 13,747 by March 1979 (8 percent). But, in the case of Mtwara region, Mwampeta argues that the main cause for dropouts was found to be pregnancies, and other related social factors as shown in table 2. Table 3 gives similar findings for Iringa Region.

In Table 2, the results show that 86 percent of all dropouts were caused by pregnancies, while table 3, reveals that the students expelled as a result of being pregnant, form 43 percent of all cases. Accordingly, in Iringa and Mtwara

regions, pregnancies are the major bottleneck for the discontinuation of girls from schools. Under these conditions, one can deduce that the pregnancies oc-

**TABLE 2: Pupil Dropout and Reasons in Mtwara Region<sup>20</sup>**

Dropout Cases	Reasons
361	Pregnancies
24	Joined the Army
29	Other Jobs
5	Deaths

**TABLE 3: Student Dropouts in Iringa Region Schools<sup>21</sup>**

DISTRICT	Preg-nancy	Village Secretary	Other Job	Theft	Army	CNE	Death	Total
Iringa Rural	8	1	1	3	17	—	—	30
Iringa Urban	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	2
Ludewa	8	—	—	3	—	1	—	12
Mufindi	8	—	1	1	—	—	—	10
Njombe	12	8	1	2	3	3	2	31
Total	36	9	4	9	20	4	3	85

cur because the girls and boys involved lacked adequate sex and family education from their parents, communities, as well as the schools involved. At the same time it can be argued that if parents had family life education and were teaching their children about sex education at home, then the chances of pregnancies could have been minimized or eliminated altogether.

### Conclusions

Tanzania is committed to its policy of socialism and self-reliance which requires adequately educated individuals who can participate effectively in the national development. It has shown its willingness through its political will to continue providing facilities to enhance the health of its people, especially those living in the rural areas. It is continuing in this area by aiding UMATI to provide family planning education for the people. It is recommended that these services should be extended and consolidated, especially in the rural areas.

The other area to be considered and applied in the Tanzanian education system is sex education for development. There have been attempts, through workshops and conferences, advances which have reached stages to integrate it with the school curriculum. There is adequate evidence, as shown from school girl pregnancies, that sex education could minimise such occurrences.

Family and sex education are essential in the development of Tanzania, and as the literacy rate goes up the need to improve the health of mothers and children becomes an immediate task. It may be true to agree with James P. Grant, Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) who argues that: The higher the female literacy rate, the higher the positive indicators for family planning programmes, less frequent pregnancies, which in turn improves maternal and child health. That education can increase incomes and agricultural productivity and therefore developments not only in Tanzania but elsewhere too.

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