

The Relationship Between Self-efficacy and Intention to Engage in Premarital Sex Among Adolescent Students in Public Secondary Schools in Tanzania

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Abstract

The study examined the relationship between self-efficacy and intention to engage in premarital sex among adolescent students in public secondary schools in Tanzania. It employed a quantitative approach guided by correlation design, using structured questionnaires. Three hundred and fifty-seven (357) participants were involved: 172 males and 185 females. The results showed that 61.6% of the respondents had a reasonably high level of self-efficacy, while 70.1% had a lower level of intention to engage in premarital sex. It was also found that there was no statistical relationship between self-efficacy and intention to engage in premarital sex among adolescent students in public secondary schools ($p=0.78>0.05$). Therefore, the government – through the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology – should introduce self-efficacy programmes in the secondary school curriculum, which will help improve moral, social, cognitive and emotional qualities in adolescent students, so that they abstain from any risky sexual behaviours.

Keywords: adolescents, self-efficacy, intention, pre-marital sex

1. Introduction

Adolescence is a transitional period between the age of 10–19 during which an individual shifts from childhood towards adulthood, to the extent that s/he is no longer a child, but not yet an adult (WHO, 2020). It is a period of life that involves the evolvment of an adolescent's feelings, knowledge, ability and skills; when one establishes social partnership, adapts managerial skills and characters and capabilities from communities necessary for enjoying the adolescent years and assuming adult roles. WHO (2019) points out that during the adolescence period many adolescents undergo emotional disputes between themselves and their communities: adolescents want freedom (independence) and social recognition. The critical period for adolescents is puberty, where they experience menarche (first menstrual period for girls) and semenarche (first ejaculation or discharge of semen for boys) (WHO, 2018). Tulloch and Kaufman (2013) categorized adolescence into early, mid- and late adolescence from which the concepts of gender identity, religious orientation, intimate relationship, sexual thought, and experimentation develop.

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Premarital sex has been considered a social and cultural taboo in many societies. However, a significant number of adolescents engage in sexual activities at an early age (premarital sex), which expose them to the risk of unintended pregnancies, abortion and Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs). Although there is provision of education on sexuality and reproductive health programmes for adolescents at secondary school, the trend of premarital sex is shocking. This ultimately leads to social, economic and health problems to adolescents and society, worldwide. The trend is even higher in Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries, Tanzania inclusive.

Premarital sex is a voluntary sexual intercourse between unmarried persons. In Europe, the first initiation of sexual intercourse among adolescence is before the age of 18; in which Denmark had 90%, Iceland had 88%, The Netherlands had 73%, and Portugal had 51% (Krauss et al., 2012). About 61% of the adolescents reported to have used birth control before engaging in sexual intercourse. Eastern Europe had 41%, Northern Europe had 30.7%, Western Europe had 18.2%, and Southern Europe had 17.6% of adolescents becoming pregnant before the age of 18, for every 1,000 adolescents (Park et al., 2013).

In Asia, India has the largest number of adolescents worldwide, estimated to be more than 243m. The initiation of sexual activity for India is below the age of 15 among whom more than 58% became pregnant before they were 18 years old; about 27% had their own families at the age of 15; about 10% were married soon after completing the minimum ten years of school although they were below 18 years (UNICEF, 2013). Moreover, 12% of adolescents aged 15–19 had already had a child. In China, the population of adolescents is 15% of the world's population, with the rate of pre-marital sex having increased from 16% at grade 7 to 34% at grade 8, and 67% at grade 12. Boys were reported to have engaged in pre-marital sex more often than girls (Shek, 2013).

In Africa, the continent comprises a significant number of adolescents and a high rate of childbearing. UNICEF (2019) reports that in SSA, the number of adolescents is approximately 23% of the region's population aged 10–19, and among them, 35% are female adolescents married before the age of 18. WHO (2020) reports that, in Ethiopia, pre-marital sex is increasing tremendously among adolescents; and that the first initiation of sexual behaviour was revealed to be between 15–19 years. The prevalence of premarital sex among youths was 22.5%, of whom 63.9% were males. Among these, the majority of high school youths (60.2%) had their first sexual intercourse at the age of 15–19 years (WHO, 2020). The main reason for such initiation in sexual intercourse was said to be 'falling in love' which accounted for 48.1%, followed by sexual desire or arousal (22.2%) (Arega et al., 2019). Furthermore, most adolescents were influenced by consumption of alcohol, watching pornography, peer pressure, and poverty; with 60.2% of adolescents aged 15–19 having had their first sexual intercourse (Arega et al., 2019). In Nigeria, the rate and concentration of sexual activity among

adolescents is before they become 18 years old. The consequences of pre-marital sex among adolescents are reported as unwanted pregnancies, poor academic performance, remorse, health effects, and depression (Stephen & Stephen, 2016).

In Tanzania, the number of children and adolescents is higher than any other age category. Among these, the number of adolescents aged 10–19 is 12.8m, which is equal to 24% of the total estimated population of 54.2 million (WHO, 2019). The Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey and Malaria Indicator Survey (2015–2016) reports that 12% of male and female adolescents engage in pre-marital sex before they are 15 years old. Among the adolescents, females were found to engage in sexual activity earlier than males. Additionally, males were reported to have more sexual partners than females. Moreover, Nkata et al. (2019) found that adolescents were sexually active with a high rate of early sexual debut, multiple sexual partners, and limited use contraceptives that result in pregnancies.

The ability to persevere sexual fantasies and experimentation after puberty depends on the level of self-efficacy. Assarzadeh et al. (2019) defined self-efficacy as a belief in one's capabilities in aptitude to overcome challenges, adversities and obstacles in one's life. The belief that adolescents cannot maintain purity plays a more significant role in determining their pre-marital sexual relationship. Moreover, Winarni et al. (2016) explained self-efficacy as similar to perceived behavioural control. Therefore, adolescents with high self-efficacy have high behavioural control, and low self-efficacy is associated with low behavioural power, which significantly influences pre-marital sexual behaviour. Reuben et al. (2016) postulated that self-efficacy is a significant predictor of pre-marital sexual relationships.

The term 'intention' reflects the willingness or readiness of an individual to engage in any behaviour; thus, the most exciting entity is performed with a magnitude of feelings, desire, and expectations that are categorized into high, moderate, or low levels of intention. Actually, this is either intrinsically or extrinsically motivated by the performer. Moore and Rosenthal (2006) note that sexual behaviour and intention among adolescents take different forms from non-coital sexual intentions, which involve kissing and patting, into actual sexual intercourse. Generally, the stronger the attitudes and the subjective norms are correlated with, the stronger the intention for pursuing sexual behaviour (Kalolo & Kibusi, 2015).

The relationship between self-efficacy and intention to engage in pre-marital sex exists worldwide. Assarzadeh et al. (2019) postulated that self-efficacy was a crucial concept and determinant of sexual behaviours and healthy adolescents. However, earlier, Kamaruddin et al. (2018) was of the opinion that there was no relationship between self-efficacy and intention to engage pre-marital sexual behaviour. The relationship is still contradicting, thus, this study aimed to examine the relationship between self-efficacy and intention to engage in pre-marital sex among adolescent students in Tanzanian public secondary schools.

The consequence of pre-marital sex for adolescents has been observed in Tanzania year after year, where about 32% of the 74,200 new infections of HIV/AIDS every year have been diagnosed in adolescents and young people (TACAIDS, 2018). Most of them never disclose their serostatus to teachers and peers because of fear of stigmatization. In addition, about 7.9% of adolescent students in public secondary schools dropped out of school due to pregnancies (MoEST, 2019). On the other hand, boy adolescents are victims of pregnancies to the extent that they undergo psychological stress after causing pregnancies. Failure to handle families and being forced to enter into marriage accelerates over-dependence on their parents, and eventually this leads to poverty. Various studies conducted in Tanzania have looked at self-efficacy and academic performance (Aslam & Ali, 2017; Mohamed, 2017). However, there is a scarcity of studies that have examined the relationship between self-efficacy and premarital sex among adolescent students. Hence, the purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between self-efficacy and intention to engage in pre-marital sex among adolescent students in Tanzania's public secondary schools.

2. Theory Underpinning the Study

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) was employed to understand the variety of conduct, including health behaviour, or predicting individuals' intention to engage in a behaviour at a specific time or place (Ajzen, 1991). The theory helps to predict the intention of human behaviour such as attitudes, subject norms and behaviour control. It asserts that an individual's behaviour is determined by a behavioural intention whether to perform or not perform an intended behaviour. In addition, the intention is connected and determined by a person's attitudes and subjective norms towards achieving that behaviour.

Ajzen (1991) pointed out three constructs that help predict the intention of human behaviour according to the TPB theory. The first is the attitude towards a behaviour, which involves an individual's feelings or the degree to which a person has positive or negative attitudes towards the behaviour of interest. In this regard, in this study a positive or negative attitude influence one's intention to engage or abstain from pre-marital sex. The second construct is subjective norms, which involve a person's beliefs about whether the surroundings of important people influence adolescents to engage in pre-marital sexual behaviour. In this study, parents, teachers, peers, siblings, and other community members influence adolescents' intention to engage in pre-marital sex. The third is perceived behavioural control, which refers to the individual's perception of the extent to which the performance of a behaviour is easy or difficult; i.e., the complete set of control beliefs that determines it. In this study, the degree of confidence (self-efficacy) that adolescents have towards performing the behaviour – either high, medium or low – influences the intention to engage in pre-marital sex.

Ajzen (1991) postulated that intention as a dependent construct of the theory involves indicating an individual's readiness to perform a given behaviour after being influenced by attitudes towards that behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control. Furthermore, a behaviour performance is based on adolescents' motivation in the sense of their conscious plan or decision to perform a specific behaviour.

The advantage of the theory is in predicting human behaviour by providing a strong connection between variables such as human attitudes, social norms, and perceived behavioural control on how they influence the desire to engage in acts like premarital sex. Apart from predicting human behaviour, the theory has some limitations since it does not take into account other factors that might motivate behaviour, such as fear, mood, past experience, and threat; which can be associated with environmental, economic, cultural, and demographic factors.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Approach and Design

This study adopted a quantitative research approach, which shows the correlation between self-efficacy and intention to engage in pre-marital sex among adolescents. Creswell and Creswell (2018) pointed out that the quantitative research approach is a means of testing objective theories by investigating the association between variables through numerical measures. This approach was used in this study because it is an approach that deductively tests theories, and allows many respondents to participate in a study. In addition, it uses questionnaires to collect substantial data from respondents within a short time, with minimal bias between respondents.

This study employed a correlation research design because it shows the relationship between variables. Creswell and Creswell (2018) pointed out that a correlation research design provides research investigation the degree of relationship between the variables studied.

3.2 Area of the Study

The study was conducted in Mvomero District in Morogoro Region, Tanzania. The selection of the region was based on the fact that it is among the leading regions where adolescent students are living in a relatively more vulnerable environment than in any other region in Tanzania {President Office Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG), 2020}.

3.3 Targeted Population

This study involved all adolescent students in public secondary schools aged 12-19 years in Mvomero District. It employed 4338 individuals as its population: with 2085 males, and 2253 females. Table 1 provides a summary of the number of students per school.

Table 1: The Number of Student Participants per School

School	Male	Female	Total
S1	528	589	1117
S2	502	523	1025
S3	453	487	940
S4	602	654	1256
Total	2085	2253	4338

Source: Field data, 2021

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size of this study was obtained through the formula proposed by Cohen et al. (2018) sample size statistical table. They proposed that for a population size ranging from 2,500 to 5,000 with a sampling error of 5% and confidence level of 95%, a study's sample size is supposed to be 357. Therefore, in consideration of the sampling size table, this study employed 357 adolescent students from four randomly selected secondary schools in Mvomero District. Of these, 172 respondents were male and 185 were female adolescent students.

Moreover, simple random sampling was used to select secondary schools and adolescent students. Also, the study employed stratified sampling to obtain a strata of respondents based on age and sex. Another stratum focused on the class level, for instance, Form One, Form Two, Form Three, and Form Four students. The last stratum was based on gender.

3.5 Data Collection Instruments

This study employed a structured questionnaire as the primary source of data collection. The questionnaires involved closed-ended printed questions distributed to adolescent students. Cohen et al. (2018) affirm that questionnaires allow the collection of a large size of data within a short period. Self-efficacy as an independent variable of this research was measured using the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) that was developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995). The internal validity of GSE led to the Cronbach alpha between 0.76 and 0.90. This scale consisted of ten (10) items with four response options starting from 'Not True at All', 'Hardly True', 'Moderately True' and 'Exactly True'.

Intention to engage in pre-marital sex was measured through ten (10) items whose responses ranged from 'very unlikely' to 'very likely', whereby 'Very Unlikely' = 1, 'Unlikely' = 2, 'Neutral' = 3, 'Likely' = 4 and 'Very Likely' = 5. Moreover, based on the responses, 'Very Likely' and 'Likely' were noted as behavioural-intended and neutral; 'Unlikely' and 'Very Unlikely' were noted as non-behavioural-intended. The percentage levels of behavioural intenders and non-behavioural intenders were measured through descriptive statistics.

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 24, was used systematically to analyse quantitative raw data. To maintain the effectiveness of data analysis, the researcher made sure that all data was cleaned, checked and rechecked to ensure all questions were considered in the SPSS software. An independent T-test was used to measure the level of self-efficacy and that of the intention to engage in premarital sex among adolescents. Lastly, multiple linear regression was used to examine the degree of relationship between self-efficacy and intention to engage in pre-marital sex among adolescent students in public secondary schools in Tanzania.

4.0 Results and Discussions

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

This study collected respondents' background information from four public secondary schools, specifically from Form One to Form Four students, aged 12-19 years. Such information was based on sex and class levels of respondents. Some 357 questionnaires were distributed and collected from respondents. Table 2 provides a summary of the respondents' characteristics.

Table 2: Respondents' Characteristics

Variables	Respondents			
	Male		Female	
Class level	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Form One	31	18.02	27	14.59
Form Two	29	16.86	36	19.46
Form Three	52	30.23	62	33.51
Form Four	60	34.88	60	32.43
Total	172	100	185	100

Source: Field Data, 2021

Based on gender, males were 172, and females were 185. Regarding the class level reached for males, the numbers were: Form One - 31 (18.02%); Form Two - 29 (16.86%); Form Three - 52 (30.23%); and Form Four - 60 (34.88%). For females, the numbers were: Form One - 27 (14.59%); Form Two - 36 (19.46%); Form Three - 62 (33.51%) and Form Four - 60 (32.43%).

4.2 Level of Self-efficacy among Adolescent Students in Public Secondary Schools

The first objective of the study was to determine the level of self-efficacy among adolescent students in public secondary schools. As earlier mentioned, the self-efficacy level was measured using the GSE, a scale widely used for measuring individual self-confidence/self-belief. It consisted of 10 items, and average scores were computed for all ten items using a four-point Likert scale format ranging from 'Not at All True' to 'Exactly True'. Table 3 summarizes the participants' frequency of responses.

Table 3: Participants' Frequencies and Percentages on Self-efficacy (N=357)

Items	Not all True		Hardly True		Moderate True		Exactly True	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
	I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough	36	10.08	15	4.20	46	12.89	260
If someone opposes me, I can find the means to get what I want	72	20.17	36	10.08	59	16.53	190	53.22
It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goal	47	13.17	12	3.36	44	12.32	254	71.15
I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events	73	20.45	58	16.25	88	24.65	138	38.66
Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations	87	24.37	57	15.97	76	21.29	137	38.38
I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort	52	14.57	26	7.28	44	12.32	235	65.83
I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities	68	19.05	43	12.04	70	19.61	176	49.30
When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions	54	15.13	27	7.56	68	19.25	208	58.26
If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution	47	13.17	36	10.08	58	16.25	216	60.50
I can usually handle whatever comes my way.	82	22.97	58	16.25	62	17.37	155	43.42

Key: F = Frequency, % = Percentage

Source: Field Data, 2021

Table 3 presents the findings on the level of confidence and belief among adolescents in public secondary schools in encountering a phenomenon and coping abilities over unforeseen situations. Some 260 (72.82%) had confidence ('Exactly True') in solving complex problems; 254 (71.15%) had confidence ('Exactly True') in sticking to their aims and accomplishing their goals. Meanwhile, 235 (65.83%) had confidence in solving their problems if they could invest the necessary effort; 216 (60.50%) had belief in thinking of solutions when subjected to trouble; 208 (58.26%) had confidence in finding solutions when confronted with problems; 190 (53.22%) were confident in finding means to get what they want. Moreover, 176 (49.30%) believed in remaining calm when faced with difficulties because they relied on their coping abilities; 155 (43.42%) had self-belief in handling whatever came in their way, 138 (38.66%) had confidence to deal with unexpected events; and 137 (38.38%) had belief in their resourcefulness to handle unforeseen situations.

To assess the level of self-efficacy, frequencies were run for ten items of the general self-efficacy scale. The aim was to assess the level of self-efficacy among the adolescent students. The score interpretation ranged from 1-2.01 as a low

level of self-efficacy, 2.1–3.01 as moderate level of self-efficacy, and 3.1–4.0 as a high level of self-efficacy. The results indicate that most students (61.6%) had a high level of self-efficacy, 25.5% were found to have a moderate level of self-efficacy; and 12.9% were found to have low-level self-efficacy. Generally, the results implied that the majority of secondary school adolescent students had a reasonably high level of self-efficacy. Therefore, an alternative hypothesis of the research was retained. Figure 1 summarizes the results.

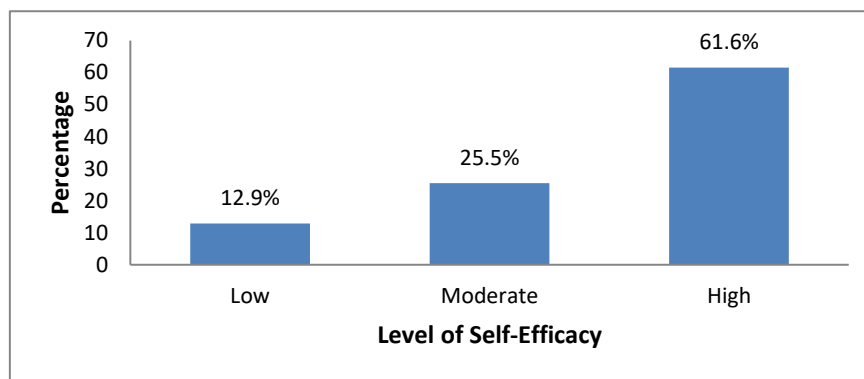


Figure 1: Level of Self-efficacy

Source: Field Data, 2021

Higher self-efficacy is associated with abstaining from sexual behaviours since an adolescent with higher self-efficacy has high confidence, feelings, ability, and self-regulation and passion on escaping any risky sexual behaviours. Packer et al. (2020) asserted that high self-efficacy necessitates low engagement in early marriage as one is hopeful on future marriage, and takes concrete actions towards achieving future goals.

The present study's findings are consistent with what was found by Armun and Chellappan (2015) in their study that focused on adolescents' social and emotional self-efficacy, obtained by measured and analysed interdependencies within and across academic performance. Their study involved a sample of 169 adolescent students aged 17–19 years; and the findings revealed that most respondents scored a high mean of self-efficacy in social behaviour and emotions within and across academic achievement levels, and were academic achievers. Furthermore, the findings corroborate what Suraya and Yunus (2017) found out regarding secondary school students' self-efficacy and academic performance. The study involved a sample of 588 respondents; and among them males were 233 and females were 355. The results revealed that most of the respondents had a high level of self-efficacy; with male students demonstrating a higher level of self-efficacy in arithmetic, computer and social sciences, and female students having a higher level of self-efficacy in writing and linguistics.

Furthermore, Assarzadeh et al. (2019) revealed that adolescent students who grew up in good family care and good relations with father, mother, siblings, and good social support tend to acquire different levels of self-efficacy. Hence, the level of the self-efficacy is dependent on the socialization and the context in which an individual is exposed.

4.3 Level of Intention to Engage in Pre-marital Sex among Adolescent Students in Public Secondary Schools

The second objective of the study sought to assess the level of intention to engage in pre-marital sex among adolescent students in public secondary schools. The level of intention was measured using an adopted Youth Sexual Intention Questionnaire (YSI-Q). The scale consisted of 10 adopted items, and average scores were computed for all ten items by using a 5-point Likert scale format ranging from 'Very Unlikely' to 'Very Likely'. Table 4 presents the results.

Table 4: Respondents' Level of Intention to Engage in Pre-Marital Sex by Percentage and Frequency (n=357)

Items	Very unlikely		Unlikely		Neutral		Likely		Very likely	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
I prefer sex before marriage in order to reduce sexual stress	197	55.18	36	10.08	34	9.52	46	12.89	44	12.32
I prefer sex before marriage because I like it	211	59.10	37	10.36	41	11.4	43	12.04	25	7.00
I prefer sex before marriage because of enjoyment	218	61.06	33	9.24	34	9.52	46	12.89	26	7.28
I would have sex now if I could find a partner who could do it with me	185	51.82	40	11.20	36	10.08	52	14.57	44	12.32
I usually practice sex by using contraceptives	193	54.06	28	7.84	53	14.85	44	12.32	39	10.92
I prefer to have sex with a faithful partner	155	43.42	31	8.68	51	14.29	43	12.04	77	21.57
I prefer to have sex for next six months	202	56.58	38	10.64	46	12.89	49	13.73	22	6.16
I prefer to have sex for next three months	209	58.54	42	11.7	35	9.80	50	14.01	21	5.88
I usually prefer to have oral sex	226	63.31	32	8.96	32	8.96	49	13.73	18	5.04
I usually prefer to have vaginal sex	212	59.38	33	9.24	35	9.80	58	16.52	19	5.32

Key: F = Frequency, % = Percentage

Source: Field Data, 2021

The results in Table 4 show the levels of adolescent students' intention to engage in pre-marital sex. The findings reveal that some 46 (12.8%) and 44 (12.32%) of adolescent students were 'Likely' and 'Very Likely' to practice sex to reduce sexual stress, respectively. A total of 43 (12.06%) and 25 (7.00%) were 'Likely' and 'Very Likely' to have sex before marriage because they liked it. Another 46 (12.89%) and 26 (7.28%) were 'Likely' and 'Very Likely' to prefer sex, respectively, before marriage because they enjoyed it. Another group of 52 (14.57%) and 44 (12.32%) were 'Likely' and 'Very Likely' to have sex if they could find a companion who could do it with them, respectively.

Furthermore, about 44 (12.32%) and 39 (10.92%) were 'Likely' and 'Very Likely' to prefer sex by using contraceptives, respectively. Some 43(12.04%) and 77(21.57%) were 'Likely' and 'Very Likely' to have sex with faithful partners; while 49 (13.73%) and 22 (6.16%) were 'Likely' and 'Very Likely' to have sex for the next six months, respectively. Only 50 (14.01%) and 21 (5.88%) were 'Likely' and 'Very Likely' to have sex for the next three months. Some 49 (13.73%) and 18 (5.04%) were 'Likely' and 'Very Likely' to have oral sex, respectively. Finally, 58 (16.25%) and 19 (5.32%) were 'Likely' and 'Very Likely' to have vaginal sex, respectively.

To assess the intention to engage in pre-marital sex among adolescent students in public secondary schools, the researcher applied the adopted YSI-Q with a five-point Likert scale that ranged from 'Very Likely' to 'Very Unlikely'. The score interpretation ranged from 1–2.4 as low level of intention, 2.5–3.4 as moderate level of intention, and 3.5–5.0 as high level of intention. The findings revealed that most (70.1%) adolescents had a low level of intention, followed by 16.2% with a high level of intention, and 13.7% with a moderate level of intention (Figure 2).

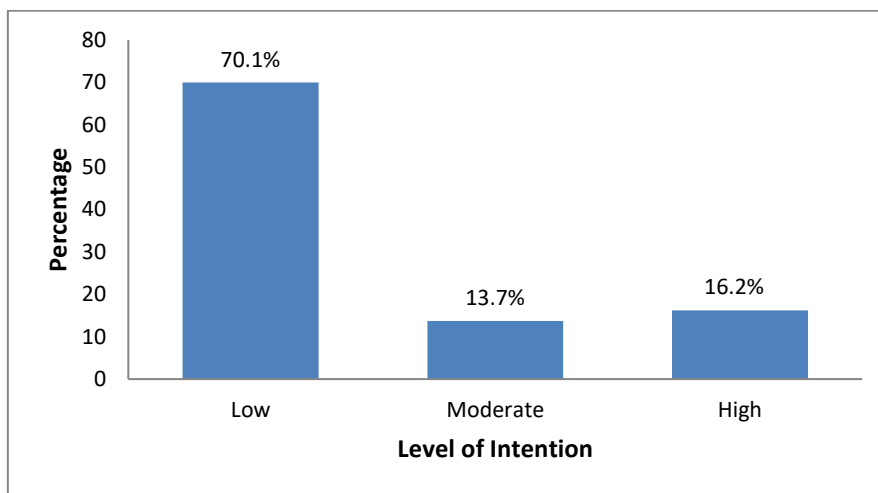


Figure 2: Level of Intention

Source: Field Data, 2021

Therefore, having a lower intention towards pre-marital sexual behaviour suggested that most adolescent students in public secondary schools had a lower inclination towards engagement in pre-marital sex. The findings agree with those of Abdullah et al. (2020b) who focused on the link between socio-cognitive factors and intention towards sexual actions among late adolescents; with the results indicating that adolescent students had low intention to engage in pre-marital sex. Again, Abdullah et al. (2020a) conducted a study to predict sexual intention to engage in pre-marital sex among late adolescent students in

Kuantan government secondary schools. The study involved 466 students aged 18–19 years; and the results found that the prevalence of sexual intention was low among adolescents. The authors suggested that the prevalence of low sexual intention could be due to social desirability bias since the respondents were unable to share their story because it was against social norms to engage in pre-marital sex, which is illegal in Malaysia. Also, the students had higher knowledge of sexual reproductive health, which lowered the intention to perform sexual acts.

Again, the findings concurred with those of a study by Do et al. (2020) that focused on the patterns of risky sexual behaviours and associated factors among youths and adolescents. The findings of the study, which involved 1,200 participants, revealed that adolescents had low intentions towards condom usage. The study reported that most adolescents in the study had higher self-efficacy, good parental communication and effective control of risky sexual behaviour: factors associated with the low intention of condom usage. This is corroborated by Winarni et al. (2016), who opined that high self-efficacy, high self-esteem and high parental involvement: all reduce the intention to engage in premarital sexual acts as high self-efficacy influences low individual involvement towards performing certain behaviours.

However, the study's findings are inconsistent with those of a study conducted by Shek (2013), which focused on the sexual behaviour and intention to engage in sexual behaviour in junior secondary school students in Hong Kong. The study findings revealed that adolescents had a high intention to engage in sexual behaviour. The reasons for engaging in pre-marital sex were physical maturation and the lack of sex education, hence, adolescents faced difficulties on how to protect themselves from sexually induced behaviours.

Again, the current study is contrary to those conducted by Shek and Leung (2016), whose results showed that adolescents had a higher level of intention to engage in sexual behaviours whereby adolescent boys increased their intention at a faster rate than girls. In addition, the study found that youths from families that had low-income had a higher level of intention to engage in pre-marital sexual behaviours. Meanwhile, adolescents with perceived family functioning and positive youth development had a lower level of intention to get initiated into sexual behaviours.

4.4 Relationship between Self-efficacy and Intention to Engage in Pre-marital Sex among Adolescent Students in Public Secondary Schools

The third objective of the study examined the relationship between self-efficacy and intention to engage in pre-marital sex among adolescent students. In this case, self-efficacy was tested as an independent variable, and intention was tested as the dependent variable. The results are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5: Multiple Linear Regression Comparing Self-efficacy and Intention to Engage in Pre-marital Sex among Adolescent Students in Public Secondary Schools

	Coef	St.Err	t-value	P-Value	95% Conf Interval	Sign
Self-efficacy	0.011	0.041	0.27	0.789	-0.069	0.091

Source: Field Data, 2021

The results of multiple regression revealed that there was a weak relationship between self-efficacy and intention to engage in pre-marital sex among adolescent students, whereby $p=0.789>0.5$. This indicates that there was no statistically significant relationship between self-efficacy and intention to engage in pre-marital sex among adolescents.

Generally, the study findings showed there was lack of association between self-efficacy and intention to engage in pre-marital sex among adolescent students. As such, these findings are consistent with those in a study conducted by Abdullah et al. (2020b), which focused on socio-cognitive factors and intention to engage in pre-marital sex. The findings reported that there was a weak statistically significant relationship between self-efficacy and intention to engage in sexual activity. Furthermore, the study found that parents' education, total household income, dating status and social norms were not significantly associated with adolescent sexual activities.

Also, the study findings aligned with those of a study conducted by Kamaruddin et al. (2018) on the prevalence of pre-marital sexual intercourse and associated factors. This study employed a cross-sectional design that involved 1,200 adolescent students in secondary schools, with respondents aged 13–17 years. The findings of this study revealed that there was no significant relationship between self-efficacy and pre-marital sex.

Nevertheless, the findings of this study are inconsistent with those of a study by Abdullah et al. (2020a) that focused on predicting sexual intention to engage in pre-marital sex; and whose findings revealed that there was a significant relationship between self-efficacy and pre-marital sex ($r=0.253$, $P<0.001$). The study was conducted in low-income families with parents whose education history ended at Form Four. The study proved that the planned behaviour theory was appropriate in predicting pre-marital sex behaviours.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, a few conclusions can be made. Firstly, secondary school adolescents aged 12–19 have a higher level of self-efficacy. Secondly, on the intention among adolescent students, the majority scored at a low level of intention, which is reasonably promising. To maintain this low level of intention, there is a need to improve relationships between students and teachers, and between students and parents/caregivers. Also, there is need to develop openness on the provision of reproductive health education and complimentary sexuality education for all adolescent students.

Based on the results, the study recommends that the government of Tanzania – through the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, and in collaboration with the Tanzania Institute of Education and other educational stakeholders – should introduce self-efficacy programmes in the secondary school curriculum that will help improve moral, social, cognitive and emotion sense of belief and confidence in abstaining from any risky sexual behaviours. Moreover, there is a need to conduct a similar study for both public and private school adolescent students, advanced level students, and university students to examine their level of self-efficacy and its relationship towards intention to engage in pre-marital sex.

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