

**Attitudes of parents towards sexual socialization of adolescents: a case
study of the Zaramo tradition- Kisarawe district**

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The study on attitudes of parents towards sexual socialization of adolescents was conducted in Kisarawe District from April and May 2005. Previous studies have shown that most parents have been hesitant towards informing their children on sexual related matters; however, such studies have not gone beyond to examine factors which can influence a parent to have a certain attitude towards the subject matter. This study was done to resolve such puzzle. The study was guided by number of questions which among other things, the questions probe on the meanings and perceptions attached to sexual socialization of adolescents: typologies of parents' attitudes and factors that can influence parent's attitudes towards sexual socialization of adolescent children.

The study used three techniques to meet its objectives; these include the questionnaire, focused group discussions and ethnographic observation. Purposeful sampling technique was used to obtain 70 respondents; these were the biological parents or guardians who had an experience of rearing the adolescent children at a specified time. The Social Construction Theory guided the study. The main tenet of the theory is that reality is socially constructed. Societal norms are acquired during the process of socialization. In this study sexual socialization is mainly focused on the Zaramo society where it is acquired in the traditional initiation rites. The major findings arising from the study is that most parents have varied attitudes towards informing the adolescent children on sexual related matters. Among these parents some take the role of informing their children on the subject matter while some have shown willingness of doing so but they are prohibited by their cultural restrictions. Different meanings and perceptions on the traditional form of sexual socialization have been identified even among the parents of the same origin. The study has shown that demographic factors have an influence with parent's attitude towards informing the adolescent children on sexual related matters. The study recommended that parents should be encouraged to accept that they are the primary educators of their children; they should be urged to consider sexual socialization as an important ingredient in child's upbringing. Contents of sexual information which parents deliver to their adolescent children have to be comprehensive, it should include all the essential components most vital, maturation process and its challenges.