

This chapter presents the 2004-2005 TDHS results on fertility levels, trends, and differentials. The analysis is based on the birth histories collected from women age 15-49 interviewed during the survey. To obtain this information, women were first asked a series of questions to determine the total number of live births that had occurred in their lifetime. Then, for each live birth, information was collected on the name, age, sex, and survival status of the child. For dead children, age at death was recorded. Information from the birth history is used to assess current and completed fertility and to look at other factors related to fertility, including age at first birth, birth intervals, and adolescent childbearing.

The following measures of current fertility are derived from birth history data:

- Age-specific fertility rates (ASFR) are expressed as the number of births per thousand women in the age group and represent a valuable measure for assessing the current age pattern of childbearing. They are defined in terms of the number of live births during a specified period to women in the particular age group divided by the number of woman-years lived in that age group during the specified period.
- The total fertility rate (TFR) is defined as the total number of births a woman would have by the end of her childbearing period if she were to pass through those years bearing children at the currently observed age-specific fertility rates. The TFR is obtained by summing the age-specific fertility rates and multiplying by five.
- The general fertility rate (GFR) is the number of live births occurring during a specified period per 1,000 women of reproductive age.
- The crude birth rate (CBR) is the number of births per 1,000 population during the specified period.

The various measures of current fertility are calculated for the three-year period preceding the survey, which roughly corresponds to the calendar period 2002-2004. This period was chosen because it allows the rates to be calculated based on the most recent information, thus avoiding the problem of omission or displacement of births because of a recall lapse, while obtaining enough cases to reduce sampling error.

4.1 FERTILITY LEVELS AND TRENDS

Fertility Levels

Table 4.1 presents information on the current fertility levels for Tanzania as whole, for urban and rural areas on the Mainland, and for Zanzibar. On the basis of the births during the 3 years preceding the survey, the TFR is 5.7 births per woman, which is considered to be among the highest rates in sub-Saharan Africa. The TFR in Mainland rural areas is 6.5 compared with 3.6 in urban areas. Rural women have, on average, 3 more births than their urban counterparts. The TFR in Zanzibar is 5.3.

The CBR in Tanzania is 42.4 births per 1,000 population. Once again, there is a clear differential in this rate by residence. The GFR in Tanzania is 198 live births per 1,000 women of reproductive age, with the rate being higher in Mainland rural areas (225) than urban areas (134).

Table 4.1 Current fertility

Age-specific and cumulative fertility rates, the general fertility rate, and the crude birth rate for the three years preceding the survey, by urban-rural residence, Tanzania 2004-05

Age group	Residence				
	Mainland			Zanzibar	Total
	Urban	Rural	Total		
15-19	92	154	135	55	132
20-24	188	317	276	197	274
25-29	162	292	254	252	254
30-34	149	246	217	236	218
35-39	87	173	154	211	156
40-44	38	90	79	85	79
45-49	(2)	23	18	28	18
TFR	3.6	6.5	5.7	5.3	5.7
GFR	134	225	199	168	198
CBR	34.6	44.8	42.5	38.0	42.4

Note: Rates for age group 45-49 may be slightly biased because of truncation. Rates in parentheses are based on 125 to 249 un-weighted woman-years of exposure.

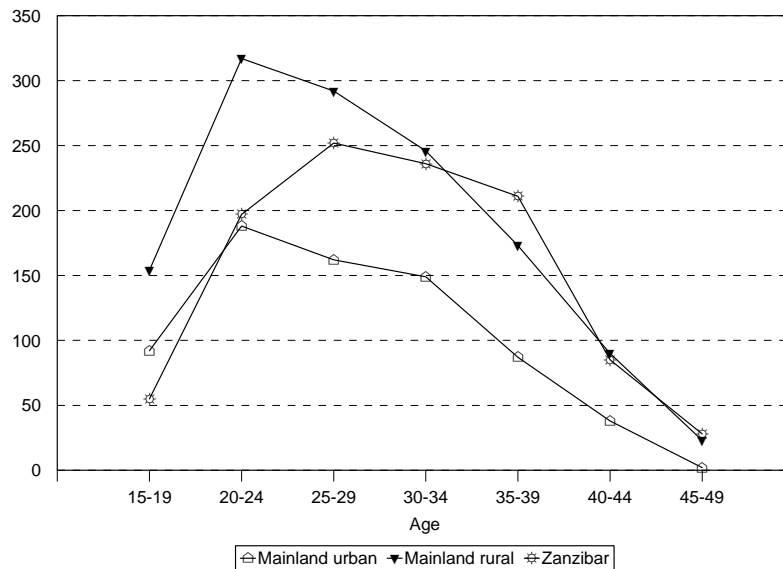
TFR: Total fertility rate for ages 15-49, expressed per woman

GFR: General fertility rate (births divided by the number of women age 15-44), expressed per 1,000 women

CBR: Crude birth rate, expressed per 1,000 population

Fertility reaches its peak among women in their 20s. Age-specific fertility rates rise from 132 births per 1,000 women age 15-19 to 274 births among women age 20-24 and then fall gradually to 18 births among women age 45-49. Figure 4.1 shows that on the Mainland, women experience the highest levels of fertility in their early 20s, regardless of urban-rural residence. On Zanzibar, however, fertility peaks among women age 25-29, and remains high among women in their 30s. A substantial proportion of women continue to bear children in their late reproductive years.

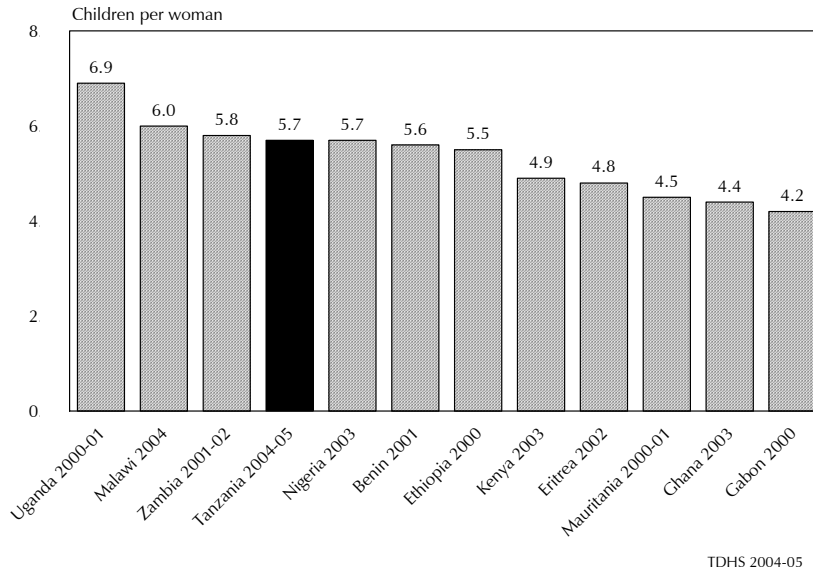
Figure 4.1 Age-Specific Fertility Rates by Residence



TDHS 2004-05

Among 12 sub-Saharan countries in which a DHS survey has been conducted since 2000, Nigeria has the same TFR as Tanzania (5.7 children per woman) and three countries have higher TFRs than Tanzania (Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2 Total Fertility Rates in Selected Sub-Saharan Countries



Differentials in Current and Completed Fertility

Table 4.2 presents differentials in two measures of current fertility, the TFR and the percentage currently pregnant. Fertility ranges from a high of 7.3 in the Western zone to a low of 3.6 in the Eastern zone. The TFRs also vary significantly by education. The total fertility rate is 6.9 births for women with no education. This is 1.3 more births than for women who have primary education (5.6 births). Among women who have attended secondary school or higher, the TFR falls to 3.3 births, so the most educated women give birth to less than half the number of children of the least educated women. Fertility differentials are even greater according to household wealth, ranging from a high of 7.3 among women in the lowest quintile to a low of 3.3 among women in highest quintile.

Although the percentage currently pregnant is a useful measure of current fertility, it does not capture all pregnant women because some women may be unaware of, or reluctant to discuss, a pregnancy in its early stages. Eleven percent of women age 15-49 are pregnant.

Table 4.2 also shows the mean number of children ever born for women age 40-49, that is, to women who are at the end of their childbearing years. This is a measure of completed or past fertility and can be compared with the current TFR to assess the extent of fertility change over the last two decades in Tanzania. For all women the mean number of live births is 6.4. The data indicate that although fertility has declined overall, there has been little or no decline among women with no education or women living in rural areas or the Western or Central zones.

Table 4.2 Fertility by background characteristics

Total fertility rate for the three years preceding the survey, percentage of women 15-49 currently pregnant, and mean number of children ever born to women age 40-49 years, by background characteristics, Tanzania 2004-05

Background characteristic	Total fertility rate ¹	Percentage currently pregnant ¹	Mean number of children ever born to women age 40-49
Residence			
Urban	3.6	7.2	5.5
Rural	6.5	11.8	6.6
Mainland/Zanzibar			
Mainland	5.7	10.6	6.4
Total urban	3.6	7.3	5.4
Dar es Salaam city	*	5.7	4.3
Other urban	4.1	8.2	5.8
Total rural	6.5	11.9	6.6
Zanzibar	5.3	9.5	6.8
Unguja	4.5	8.9	6.3
Pemba	(7.2)	11.0	7.9
Zone			
Western	7.3	13.8	7.3
Northern	4.9	9.4	6.0
Central	(6.1)	11.6	6.2
Southern highlands	5.9	10.6	6.6
Lake	6.7	12.6	7.2
Eastern	3.6	6.2	5.0
Southern	4.8	8.6	5.5
Education			
No education	6.9	11.7	6.9
Primary incomplete	5.6	10.3	6.6
Primary complete	5.6	11.1	5.8
Secondary+	3.3	4.7	4.4
Wealth quintile			
Lowest	7.3	12.8	6.9
Second	6.7	12.3	6.8
Middle	6.6	11.1	6.4
Fourth	5.3	10.9	6.5
Highest	3.3	6.9	4.9
Total	5.7	10.5	6.4

Note: Figures in parentheses are based on 125-249 unweighted woman-years of exposure. An asterisk indicates that a figure is based on fewer than 125 woman-years of exposure and has been suppressed.
¹ Women age 15-49 years

Trends in Fertility

Trends in Tanzanian fertility can be assessed in several other ways. Fertility trends can be investigated using retrospective data from the birth histories collected from respondents in a single survey. Table 4.3 shows that fertility was at a high level during the period 15-19 years before the survey (i.e., during the years 1985-1989). The fertility rates show a decrease in all age groups over successive time periods.

Table 4.3 Trends in age-specific fertility rates

Age-specific fertility rates for five-year periods preceding the survey, by mother's age at the time of the birth, Tanzania 2004-05

Mother's age at birth	Number of years preceding survey			
	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-19
15-19	139	144	146	147
20-24	266	262	283	290
25-29	252	260	288	283
30-34	220	233	244	[270]
35-39	157	165	[215]	-
40-44	79	[119]	-	-
45-49	[21]	-	-	-

Note: Age-specific fertility rates are per 1,000 women. Estimates in brackets are truncated.

Another way to assess fertility trends is by comparison with estimates obtained in earlier surveys, censuses, or vital registration data. Table 4.4 shows fertility rates estimated from a series of surveys conducted in Tanzania since 1991 and the most recent census. These sources include the 1991-92 TDHS, the 1996 TDHS, the 2002 Tanzania Population and Housing Census, the 1999 TRCHS, and the 2004-05 TDHS. The TFR estimated in 1991-92 was 6.3 children per woman. However, the 2004-05 TDHS TFR of 5.7 is statistically at the same level as rates estimated by the 1996 TDHS (5.8 births) and the 1999 TRCHS (5.6) births. Thus, there is no evidence of fertility decline in Tanzania over the last eight years. Although the 2002 Population and Housing Census TFR is 6.3, higher than all three DHS surveys since 1996, the Census TFR is calculated using indirect methods and, thus, comparison is difficult.

Table 4.4 Trends in fertility rates

Age-specific fertility rates (per 1,000 women) and total fertility rates from selected surveys and censuses: 1991-92 TDHS, 1996 TDHS, 1999 TRCHS, 2002 census, and 2004-05 TDHS

Age group	1991-92 TDHS	1996 TDHS	2002 census ¹	1999 TRCHS	2004-05 TDHS
15-19	144	135	113	138	132
20-24	282	260	290	268	274
25-29	270	255	287	240	254
30-34	231	217	248	213	218
35-39	177	167	185	138	156
40-44	108	87	96	78	79
45-49	37	42	34	37	18
TFR	6.3	5.8	6.3	5.6	5.7

Note: Rates refer to the three-year period preceding the survey, except for the 2002 census, which uses a period that varies with the age groups used to make the correction.
¹ Census rates are based on indirect adjustments.

Children Ever Born and Living

Table 4.5 shows all women and currently married women by number of children ever born. Children ever born is a measure of lifetime fertility. It reflects the accumulation of births over the past 30 years to the women interviewed in the survey and, therefore, its relevance to the current fertility situation is limited. Furthermore, the data are subject to recall error, which is typically greater for older than younger women.

The information on children ever born (or parity) is useful in looking at a number of issues. These results show how average family size varies across age groups. The percentage of women in their forties who have never had children also provides an indicator of the level of primary infertility,¹ or the inability to bear children. Voluntary childlessness is rare in developing countries like Tanzania so that married women in their late forties with no live births are predominantly those involuntarily so. Comparison of the differences in the mean number of children ever born and surviving reflect the cumulative effects of mortality levels during the period in which women have been bearing children.

Results in Table 4.5 show the number of children ever born for all women and currently married women. Women who are currently married have given birth to an average of 3.7 children, whereas the average number of births for all women is 2.9.

The mean number of births increases with age, reflecting the natural family growth process. For example, the mean number of births for all women age 25-29 is 2.6 births, for those ages 30-34 it is 4.0 births, and for those age 35-39 it is 5.2 births. At age 45-49, the end of the reproductive period, the mean is 6.8 births. The high level of fertility among Tanzanian women is evident from the high percentage of married women in their forties who gave birth to large numbers of children during their reproductive years. The mean number of children ever born for currently married women age 40-44 and 45-49 is 6.2 and 7.1 births, respectively.

Table 4.5 also shows that early childbearing is common in Tanzania. One-fifth of women age 15-19 have given birth to at least one child. Among women age 20-24 years, more than three-fourths have given birth. The proportion of women in their late 40s who have never given birth is an

¹ This estimate of primary infertility does not include women who may have had one or more births but who are unable to have more children, a measure of *secondary infertility*.

indication of primary (permanent) sterility. In Tanzania, 2 percent of currently married women age 45-49 are childless. Thus, primary sterility in Tanzania is low.

The last column in Table 4.5 shows the mean number of living children for women age 15-49. As expected, the difference between mean number of children ever born and who are still living is small among currently married women under 30, but increases for those age 30 and above.

Table 4.5 Children ever born and living
Percent distribution of all women and currently married women by number of children ever born, mean number of children ever born, and mean number of living children, according to age group, Tanzania 2004-05

Age	Number of children ever born											Total	Number of women	Mean number of children ever born	Mean number of living children
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+				
ALL WOMEN															
15-19	80.4	17.6	1.8	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	2,245	0.22	0.20
20-24	22.5	32.2	29.7	11.3	3.5	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	2,007	1.44	1.28
25-29	8.2	13.1	25.8	26.6	16.5	6.2	3.0	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.0	100.0	1,885	2.64	2.31
30-34	5.3	6.7	13.4	16.4	17.6	16.8	13.1	6.5	3.2	0.6	0.3	100.0	1,542	3.95	3.43
35-39	2.4	5.5	6.8	11.4	14.1	14.0	15.0	12.9	8.4	4.6	4.8	100.0	1,053	5.19	4.38
40-44	2.3	3.8	5.0	7.7	10.9	13.5	13.0	13.2	10.8	9.6	10.4	100.0	834	6.00	4.97
45-49	1.5	4.5	4.2	5.0	7.6	9.0	12.7	13.2	11.4	11.2	19.6	100.0	763	6.77	5.41
Total	24.7	14.7	14.3	11.7	9.2	6.9	6.1	4.4	3.1	2.2	2.8	100.0	10,329	2.91	2.47
CURRENTLY MARRIED WOMEN															
15-19	46.9	46.7	5.9	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	590	0.60	0.56
20-24	9.5	33.2	36.5	15.3	4.5	0.7	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	1,400	1.76	1.57
25-29	3.6	11.3	26.4	28.6	18.4	7.5	3.5	0.4	0.2	0.1	0.0	100.0	1,511	2.87	2.52
30-34	3.4	5.7	11.6	16.2	19.4	17.0	14.5	7.6	3.6	0.7	0.3	100.0	1,292	4.19	3.66
35-39	2.3	4.9	4.9	11.3	14.2	14.2	15.8	13.4	8.8	5.1	5.0	100.0	884	5.34	4.52
40-44	1.9	2.5	4.6	7.7	10.3	13.7	13.7	12.7	11.3	9.8	11.8	100.0	694	6.19	5.14
45-49	1.7	3.4	3.4	5.1	6.6	7.4	12.0	13.0	12.3	12.4	22.7	100.0	580	7.08	5.71
Total	7.9	15.3	17.1	15.0	11.9	8.7	7.9	5.6	4.0	2.8	3.8	100.0	6,950	3.69	3.16

4.2 BIRTH INTERVALS

The term “birth interval” refers to the period of time between two successive live births. Information on the length of birth intervals provides insight into birth spacing patterns. Research has shown that children born too soon after a previous birth are at an increased risk of dying, particularly when the interval between births is less than 24 months. Maternal health is also jeopardized when births are closely spaced.

Table 4.6 shows the distribution of births in the five-year period preceding the survey by the number of months since the previous birth, according to various selected demographic and socio-economic variables. First births are excluded from the table. Sixteen percent of births in Tanzania have intervals of less than 2 years, and 5 percent are less than 18 months apart. Four in 10 births have an interval of 24-35 months, and 43 percent are at least 3 years apart. The mean birth interval is 33 months.

There is no significant difference in median birth interval by birth order or sex of the preceding child. For births occurring after the death of the preceding child, the median birth interval is 29 months, compared with 34 months among births preceded by a living child. This is a result, in part,

of the fact that the death of a newborn leads to a shortening of the period of postpartum amenorrhoea, a result of the cessation of breastfeeding.

Looking at urban-rural differentials, the median birth interval in urban areas is about 6 months longer than for rural areas. Forty-four percent of births in urban areas occur at intervals less than 3 years, compared with 60 percent of births in rural areas. Median birth intervals range from a high of 45 months in the Southern and Southern highlands zones to a low of 30 months in the Lake zone.

Birth intervals increase as educational attainment increases. Women who completed at least some secondary education have a longer birth interval (38 months) than those women who have never attended school (32 months).

Table 4.6 Birth intervals								
Percent distribution of non-first births in the five years preceding the survey by number of months since preceding birth, according to background characteristics, Tanzania 2004-05								
Background characteristic	Months since preceding birth					Total	Number of non-first births	Median number of months since preceding birth
	7-17	18-23	24-35	36-47	48+			
Age								
15-19	(14.6)	(35.2)	(34.7)	(13.0)	(2.5)	100.0	42	(24.1)
20-29	5.7	13.0	45.0	21.3	15.0	100.0	3,308	31.2
30-39	4.3	9.7	38.7	20.1	27.3	100.0	2,773	35.0
40-49	3.6	5.7	29.1	23.7	37.9	100.0	659	40.4
Birth order								
2-3	4.9	11.3	39.5	21.9	22.5	100.0	3,123	33.9
4-6	4.7	10.9	41.6	19.7	23.1	100.0	2,464	33.2
7+	6.0	10.9	42.5	21.4	19.3	100.0	1,195	32.9
Sex of preceding birth								
Male	5.1	11.0	41.3	20.5	22.1	100.0	3,408	33.1
Female	4.9	11.2	40.3	21.5	22.3	100.0	3,374	33.7
Survival of preceding birth								
Living	2.8	10.7	42.3	21.6	22.7	100.0	5,877	33.9
Dead	19.0	13.7	31.3	17.0	18.9	100.0	904	29.1
Residence								
Urban	4.8	8.8	30.1	19.8	36.5	100.0	1,182	38.9
Rural	5.0	11.6	43.1	21.2	19.1	100.0	5,600	32.7
Mainland/Zanzibar								
Mainland	5.0	11.0	40.9	21.0	22.1	100.0	6,601	33.4
Total urban	4.7	8.7	30.4	19.5	36.8	100.0	1,157	39.0
Dar es Salaam city	3.6	5.3	17.8	18.5	54.8	100.0	253	55.8
Other urban	5.0	9.7	33.9	19.8	31.7	100.0	904	36.5
Total rural	5.0	11.5	43.1	21.4	18.9	100.0	5,444	32.7
Zanzibar	5.6	12.3	38.1	18.4	25.6	100.0	180	34.0
Unguja	3.3	9.9	33.6	21.4	31.9	100.0	108	37.1
Pemba	9.0	15.9	44.9	14.0	16.2	100.0	72	29.9
Zone								
Western	4.5	12.6	50.6	19.1	13.2	100.0	1,542	30.9
Northern	5.7	12.9	34.1	22.9	24.4	100.0	859	35.2
Central	4.8	11.1	39.9	20.5	23.8	100.0	577	34.1
Southern highlands	4.1	9.5	40.7	26.2	19.5	100.0	1,016	34.6
Lake	7.2	13.1	46.5	18.4	14.9	100.0	1,488	30.2
Eastern	2.7	7.2	27.7	19.5	42.9	100.0	671	43.3
Southern	3.5	4.7	23.2	24.3	44.2	100.0	447	44.7
Education								
No education	4.3	13.1	44.1	19.7	18.9	100.0	1,856	32.1
Primary incomplete	5.3	12.1	41.4	22.7	18.4	100.0	1,084	32.9
Primary complete	5.3	9.8	39.5	21.2	24.2	100.0	3,613	34.1
Secondary+	4.4	10.5	31.6	20.5	33.1	100.0	229	37.6
Wealth quintile								
Lowest	4.8	13.5	43.2	21.0	17.4	100.0	1,625	31.8
Second	5.6	9.8	44.8	21.4	18.5	100.0	1,479	32.6
Middle	5.5	12.5	43.3	21.5	17.1	100.0	1,465	32.2
Fourth	4.6	9.6	40.6	20.8	24.4	100.0	1,326	34.2
Highest	4.1	8.6	25.9	19.5	41.8	100.0	888	42.6
Total	5.0	11.1	40.8	21.0	22.2	100.0	6,782	33.4

Note: First-order births are excluded. The interval for multiple births is the number of months since the preceding pregnancy that ended in a live birth. Figures in parentheses are based on 25-49 unweighted cases.

4.3 AGE AT FIRST BIRTH

One of the factors that determines fertility in a population is the average age at first birth. For example, women who marry early are typically exposed to pregnancy for a longer period than women who marry late. Thus, early childbearing generally leads to a large family size. It is also associated with increased health risks for the mother and child. A rise in the median age at first birth is typically a sign of transition to lower fertility levels.

Table 4.7 presents the percentage of women who have given birth by specified ages and the median age at first birth, according to current age. Among women age 15-19, 1 percent gave birth by age 15, and 3 percent of women age 20-24 did so. Among older women age 45-49, 8 percent had their first birth by 15. The median age at first birth has increased from 18.7 among women age 45-49 to 19.5 among women age 20-24.

Table 4.7 Age at first birth

Among all women, percentage who gave birth by specific age, and median age at first birth, by current age, Tanzania 2004-05

Current age	Percentage who gave birth by exact age					Percentage who have never given birth	Number of women	Median age at first birth
	15	18	20	22	25			
15-19	1.1	na	na	na	na	80.4	2,245	a
20-24	2.7	29.1	56.5	na	na	22.5	2,007	19.5
25-29	3.3	25.6	56.1	74.2	88.1	8.2	1,885	19.6
30-34	2.4	26.9	56.9	74.9	86.4	5.3	1,542	19.6
35-39	4.6	34.2	60.8	78.0	89.5	2.4	1,053	19.1
40-44	4.4	33.1	58.8	76.8	89.2	2.3	834	19.3
45-49	7.7	41.6	65.8	80.7	91.3	1.5	763	18.7

na = Not applicable
a = Omitted because less than 50 percent of women had a birth before reaching the beginning of the age group

Differentials in age at first birth are shown in Table 4.8. Median age at first birth for women age 25-49 is 19.4 years. There is a little variation in age at first birth by background characteristics. In the Northern zone, median age at first birth for women age 25-49 is 20.1 years, or 1 year higher than in the Southern and Lake zones. There is a positive relationship between age at first birth and level of education in all ages.

Table 4.8 Median age at first birth by background characteristics

Median age at first birth among women age 20 (25)-49 years, by current age and background characteristics, Tanzania 2004-05

Background characteristic	Current age						Women age 25-49
	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	
Residence							
Urban	20.8	20.2	20.1	19.3	19.2	18.3	19.7
Rural	19.0	19.5	19.3	19.1	19.4	18.8	19.3
Mainland/Zanzibar							
Mainland	19.4	19.6	19.6	19.1	19.4	18.7	19.4
Total urban	a	20.2	20.1	19.2	19.2	18.4	19.7
Dar es Salaam city	a	20.4	20.9	(19.4)	*	*	20.3
Other urban	a	20.0	19.6	19.1	19.0	18.5	19.4
Total rural	19.0	19.4	19.3	19.1	19.4	18.8	19.3
Zanzibar	a	21.3	19.8	19.5	18.6	18.0	19.8
Unguja	a	21.7	20.5	19.7	18.7	17.5	20.2
Pemba	a	20.0	18.9	19.1	18.6	(18.5)	19.1
Zone							
Western	18.9	19.4	19.4	18.8	19.5	18.6	19.3
Northern	a	20.4	19.9	20.1	20.2	19.7	20.1
Central	19.6	19.2	19.2	19.0	19.7	19.3	19.3
Southern highlands	19.1	19.5	19.3	19.7	19.3	18.2	19.4
Lake	18.8	19.4	19.4	18.8	18.6	18.6	19.1
Eastern	a	19.7	20.4	18.7	19.6	18.4	19.6
Southern	19.0	19.8	18.7	18.8	18.6	18.3	19.0
Education							
No education	18.2	19.2	18.8	18.5	18.2	18.6	18.7
Primary incomplete	18.5	18.7	19.2	18.2	18.7	18.0	18.7
Primary complete	19.7	19.6	19.5	19.3	19.9	19.2	19.6
Secondary+	a	24.8	23.7	23.2	22.3	(21.1)	23.8
Wealth quintile							
Lowest	18.6	19.5	19.2	19.1	19.2	19.2	19.3
Second	19.0	19.1	18.9	18.8	19.6	18.9	19.0
Middle	19.2	19.5	19.4	18.9	19.4	18.3	19.2
Fourth	19.3	19.4	19.5	19.5	19.0	18.5	19.3
Highest	a	20.7	20.6	19.5	19.5	18.9	20.2
Total	19.5	19.6	19.6	19.1	19.3	18.7	19.4

Note: Figures in parentheses are based on 25-49 unweighted cases. An asterisk indicates that a figure is based on fewer than 25 unweighted cases and has been suppressed.
a = Omitted because less than 50 percent of the women had a birth before reaching the beginning of the age group

4.4 ADOLESCENT FERTILITY

Adolescent childbearing has potentially negative demographic and social consequences. Adolescent mothers, especially those under the age of 18, have been shown to be more likely to suffer from pregnancy and delivery complications than older mothers, resulting in higher morbidity and mortality for both themselves and their children. Early childbearing also limits an adolescent's ability to pursue educational opportunities and can curtail her access to job opportunities.

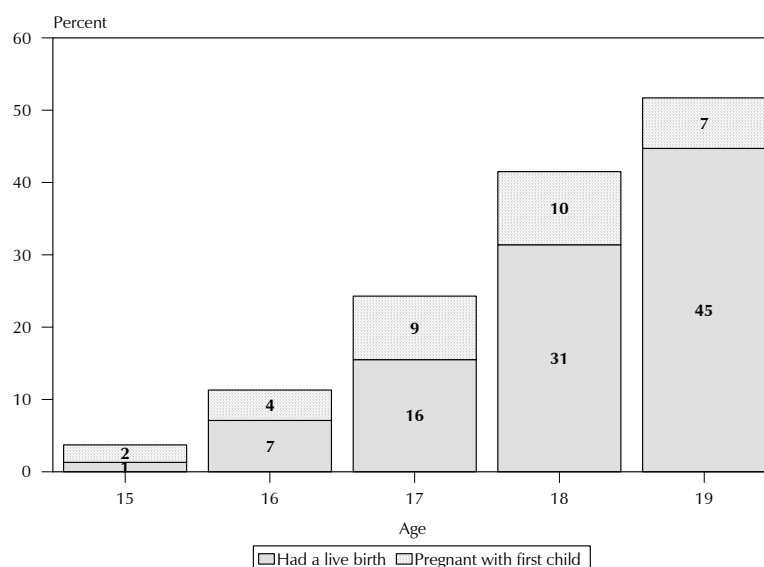
Table 4.9 and Figure 4.3 show the percentage of adolescent women (age 15-19) who are mothers or pregnant with their first child. A quarter of women age 15-19 have begun childbearing: 20 percent are already mothers and 7 percent are pregnant with their first child. The percentage of women age 15-19 who have begun childbearing has remained constant over the last 15 years according to the results of the 1991-92, 1996, and 2004-05 TDHS surveys and the 1999 TRCHS.

Table 4.9. Adolescent pregnancy and motherhood

Percentage of women age 15-19 who are mothers or pregnant with their first child, by background characteristics, Tanzania 2004-05

Background characteristic	Percentage who are:		Percentage who have begun childbearing	Number of women
	Mothers	Pregnant with first child		
Age				
15	1.3	2.4	3.7	448
16	7.1	4.2	11.3	493
17	15.5	8.8	24.3	410
18	31.4	10.1	41.5	487
19	44.7	7.0	51.7	407
Residence				
Urban	15.2	4.4	19.6	670
Rural	21.4	7.3	28.7	1,575
Mainland/Zanzibar				
Mainland	20.0	6.6	26.6	2,168
Total urban	15.3	4.5	19.8	652
Dar es Salaam city	12.2	2.4	14.6	204
Other urban	16.8	5.4	22.2	448
Total rural	22.0	7.5	29.5	1,516
Zanzibar	7.4	1.9	9.3	77
Unguja	6.9	1.6	8.5	51
Pemba	8.5	2.4	10.9	26
Zone				
Western	20.2	9.7	29.9	475
Northern	12.6	5.1	17.7	318
Central	17.9	6.1	23.9	170
Southern highlands	19.0	6.8	25.8	308
Lake	26.1	8.5	34.7	405
Eastern	16.1	2.2	18.3	326
Southern	30.5	5.0	35.5	165
Education				
No education	31.0	11.9	42.9	464
Primary incomplete	15.8	5.3	21.1	593
Primary complete	20.8	6.1	26.8	933
Secondary+	3.3	0.8	4.0	256
Wealth quintile				
Lowest	22.7	9.4	32.0	355
Second	23.8	8.9	32.6	449
Middle	22.7	5.9	28.6	412
Fourth	21.5	5.2	26.7	391
Highest	11.7	4.3	16.0	638
Total	19.6	6.5	26.0	2,245

Figure 4.3 Adolescent Childbearing



TDHS 2004-05

The proportion of adolescents who have started childbearing is higher in rural areas (29 percent) than in urban areas (20 percent). Adolescent childbearing is least common in the Northern and Eastern zone (18 percent each) and most common in the Lake and Southern zones (35 and 36 percent, respectively).

There is an inverse relationship between early childbearing and level of education among adolescents. Those adolescents with at least some secondary education are less likely to start early childbearing compared with adolescents who have less education. For example, 43 percent of adolescents with no education have begun childbearing compared with 4 percent of adolescents with secondary or higher education. Similarly, adolescents in the lowest and second wealth quintiles are approximately twice as likely to have begun childbearing as adolescents in the highest wealth quintile.