

## ABSTRACT

### Background

Studies have shown that the use of contraceptives among women in reproductive age reduces pregnancy-related complications and improves women and children's health. In sub-Saharan Africa it has been reported by the WHO that these complications are the leading cause of death among young women. Importantly, complications resulting in newborn deaths are 50% higher among adolescent mothers. The global community's response towards improving use of contraceptives is widely acknowledged. Despite these, contraceptive acceptor rates in developing countries are reportedly low. This study was designed to determine uptake of contraceptives among female adolescents (15-24years) attending senior high school in Tamale metropolis

### Method

The study was a descriptive cross-sectional design that employed simple random sampling as a procedure for data collection. Participants were randomly selected by programmes and classes of study through balloting. A total of 399 female adolescents (15-24years) attending senior high school in the metropolis were recruited for the study. There were three schools that were selected purposively for the study. These were the Ghana Senior High, Dabokpa Technical Institute and Yimig Senior High/Tech. schools. Data was collected in January, 2020 using self-administered questionnaire. The data was cross tabulated and analysed using SPSS version 22. Statistically significant association between demographic variables and importance of contraceptives were determined at 95% confidence interval and a predictive value of 5%.

## Results

The mean age of respondents was 20.2±2.6 years. Prevalence of contraceptives was found to be 47% among study participants. There were misconceptions of infertility (67%) and developing cancer (33%) as reasons for not using contraceptives. Majority of the participants (61%) stated that male condom was the most preferred form of contraception. Prevention of unwanted pregnancy (69%) was the most important reason why participants use contraceptives. However, cost of contraception was not a problem to participants as more than half (51%) said they could buy contraceptives. A chi-Square test to determine association suggest respondents who were between 20-24 had 2.99 increase odds of using contraceptives than those below 20 years [AOR =2.99 (95%CI: 0.43, 2.08), P= 0.982]. There were 4.91 increase odds of staying with both parents influences contraceptive use [AOR= 4.91 (95% CI: 1.36, 17.68), P= 0.015].

## Conclusion

The importance of contraception to improving women and children's health cannot be overemphasized. The study revealed male condom was the most preferred method (61%) whilst prevention of unwanted pregnancy (69%) was the most important determinant for using contraception among participants studied. The study also underscored the influence of socio-cultural norms and challenges of adolescent-parent communication on contraceptive use. It is evident from the study that increase education and sensitization to dispel misconceptions associated with contraceptive use will result in increased uptake. The study further recommends research to explore sociocultural norms that prevents uptake as (81%) respondents averred that their ethnic background frowns on contraceptive use.