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# Comparative analysis of adolescent pregnancy causes in Tanzania: A comprehensive review of literature

<sup>1</sup>Sia Willy Machange & <sup>2</sup>Elizabeth Ludovick Temba

## Abstract

Teenage pregnancy remains a global challenge with profound implications, necessitating a thorough exploration of its causes and contributing factors. This study provides a comprehensive review of research studies conducted in Tanzania from 2019 to 2023, contributing to the ongoing discourse on the complex interplay of socio-cultural, economic, and educational factors shaping the experiences of Tanzanian adolescents. Twelve studies, comprising seven journals and five master theses, were purposefully selected to identify commonalities and disparities in their findings. The study systematically examines the identified studies, shedding light on the prevailing factors associated with teenage pregnancies in Tanzania. Several themes emerged from the reviewed literature, with all studies unequivocally pinpointing poor knowledge on sexual and reproductive health as a common factor contributing to teenage pregnancies. Moreover, a substantial majority, 75%, highlighted the significance of low economic status in this context, emphasizing the intersectionality of socio-economic factors. Furthermore, this comparative analysis delves into the nuanced findings of the selected studies, revealing that 50% of the reviewed research identified peer influence as a significant contributor to teenage pregnancies. These findings not only underscore the multifaceted nature of the issue but also highlight the need for targeted interventions addressing both individual knowledge gaps and broader socio-economic challenges.

**Keywords:** *adolescent, adolescent pregnancy, pregnancy, literature review*

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## 1. Introduction

Teenage pregnancy is a worldwide public health issue that has an impact on both developed and developing nations (Worku et al., 2021). Approximately 150 out of every 1,000 births worldwide occur to teenage girls between the ages of 15 and 18 (Bajracharya et al., 2019). According to estimates, half of teenage pregnancies in underdeveloped nations are unplanned; the majority of these teenage pregnancies result in abortions. It is estimated that 5 million teenage girls undergo abortions annually, of which 70 percent of them are insecure, which increases maternal mortality, morbidity, and long-term health issues (Moshi & Tilisho, 2023). Efforts have been made to reduce adolescent pregnancy globally, and this is evident in Sustainable Development Goal 3, target 3.7 which seeks to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including family planning, information, and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes by 2030 (Ahinkorah et al., 2021).

Although a decline in adolescent birth rates has been observed globally, Sub-Saharan Africa countries have twice the global average, with over 100 births per 1,000 women in 2021. The estimated actual number of births among 15–19-year-olds was 6,114,000 and 332,000 among younger adolescents aged 10–14 years in Sub-Saharan Africa countries in 2021 (Maharaj, 2022). Since recent times, several governmental and non-governmental organisations in some African countries have focused on reducing the adolescent pregnancy rate, although very slow progress has been made (Kassa et al., 2018). According to Sole for African Child (2023), an average of 7.3 million adolescent girls in Africa become pregnant each year. Subsequently, in a study conducted by Worku et al. (2021) in East African countries (Burundi, Ethiopia, Comoros, Uganda, Rwanda, Tanzania, Mozambique, Madagascar, Zimbabwe, Kenya, Zambia, and Malawi), the prevalence of adolescent pregnancies was 54.6 percent (95 percent CI: 53.85, 55.34 percent) across the region, with the highest rates in Zimbabwe (65.29 percent) and the lowest rates in Rwanda (36.15%).

East Africa has one of the highest rates of teenage pregnancy and births worldwide (Anadolu Agency, 2020). The prevalence of adolescent pregnancy in eastern Africa ranges from 18 to 29% and around half of these pregnancies are unintended (Worku et al., 2021). The observed prevalence of teenage pregnancy and childbearing is high in Tanzania compared to other East African countries such as Uganda (from 24% to 25% in 2011–2016),

Rwanda (from 6% to 7% in 2010–2014/15), and Kenya where it has remained constant at 18% in 2008/09–2014 (Ntegwa & Miho, 2021).

Tanzania is one of the countries with the highest rate of adolescent pregnancy. According to data compiled in Tanzania by the Guttmacher Institute, a sexual and reproductive rights organisation, 360,000 girls and young women ages 15 to 19 give birth each year (Human Rights Watch, 2021). Subsequently, according to Galal (2023), Tanzania is among the countries with the highest adolescent fertility rate in Africa as of 2021, being at number 8.

Adolescent pregnancy is known more for its cons. According to the World Health Organisation (2023), adolescent mothers (aged 10–19 years) face higher risks of eclampsia, puerperal endometritis, and systemic infections than women aged 20–24 years, and babies of adolescent mothers face higher risks of low birth weight, preterm birth, and severe neonatal conditions. Furthermore, according to UNFPA (2016), when a girl becomes pregnant, her life changes radically, including ending her education and job prospects. They added that the teen becomes more vulnerable to poverty and exclusion, and her health often suffers.

This paper holds paramount significance as it unveils critical insights into the multifaceted determinants of adolescent pregnancy that contribute to teenage pregnancies in the studied regions of Tanzania. This study illuminates the root causes of teenage pregnancies, which will facilitate more relevant interventions in addressing the issue and ultimately promote the well-being of adolescents. Furthermore, by synthesizing the findings from these diverse sources, this study seeks to not only delineate the current landscape but also contribute to the ongoing discourse surrounding the complex interplay of socio-cultural, economic, and educational factors in shaping the experiences of Tanzanians in the topic area.

## **2. Literature Review**

### ***2.1. Adolescent pregnancy***

Adolescent pregnancy is a pregnancy occurring in girls aged 10 to 19 years (Ngoda, 2021). Childbirth is risky for adolescent girls, and research indicates that pregnancy-related conditions are the second major cause of death among adolescent girls in developing countries (Wado et al., 2019). Although a policy change in late 2021 in Tanzania allowed

teen mothers who dropped out of school to return, school dropout due to pregnancy is still a significant issue to solve (Hirose et al., 2023). Typically, there are two types of adolescent pregnancy: planned and unplanned.

Planned adolescent pregnancy happens when a teenage girl consciously chooses to become pregnant. In this case, people deliberately choose to become parents and take proactive measures to become pregnant. Adolescent planned pregnancies have received very little attention (Macutkiewicz & MacBeth, 2017). Women tended to use the term "planned" only in cases where four requirements were satisfied in their prior reports (Cater & Cater, 2006); they included planning to get pregnant, quitting contraception, coming to a relationship agreement, and choosing the appropriate lifestyle and life stage.

Unplanned adolescent pregnancy is an unanticipated pregnancy that results from the adolescent having unprotected intercourse and either not using birth control or using it improperly (Erasmus, 2017). Teenage pregnancies are frequently unintended and undesirable (Malek et al., 2019). Unplanned pregnancy is described as both frequent and widespread which occurs in all segments of society, not just among teens, unmarried women, poor women, and minorities (Baptiste & Ugiriwabo, 2023). Unsafe abortion is linked to unintended adolescent pregnancy and accounts for 13% of maternal deaths worldwide (Malek et al., 2019).

## ***2.2. The challenge of adolescent pregnancy in Tanzania***

Most teenagers with unplanned pregnancies are at a greater risk, especially those who live in low socioeconomic status, those with a family that has a history of teenage pregnancies, and those who experienced abuse (Kabbudula, 2019). According to Madume and Dibia (2021), teenagers with unplanned pregnancies have a lower likelihood of graduating from middle school and enrolling in a secondary school or college. Social consequences for unmarried pregnant adolescents may include stigma, rejection, or violence by partners, parents, and peers. Girls who become pregnant before the age of 18 are more likely to experience violence within a marriage or partnership (Health Think, 2021). Furthermore, teenagers who are pregnant face risks of pregnancy and childbirth-related complications such as pre-eclampsia, infections, and puerperal endometritis, as well as

increased danger of low birth weight, preterm delivery, and severe neonatal conditions (Moshi & Tilisho, 2023).

### 3. Methodology

The study used comparative analysis of existing data to analyse the existing data sets and information related to teenage pregnancy from various regions in Tanzania and to identify patterns, trends of factors associated with teenage pregnancy. Comparative analysis attempts to reach conclusions beyond single cases and explains differences and similarities between objects of analysis as well as identifying the relations between the objects against the backdrop of their contextual conditions (Esser & Vliegthart, 2017). By comparing multiple sources or groups, similarities and differences can be discerned, providing a more comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. If similar patterns emerge consistently, it adds credibility to the conclusions drawn, reinforcing the robustness of the research outcomes.

**Table 1**

*Literatures from 2019 to 2023 on teenage pregnancies in Tanzania*

s/n	Authors	Type of publication
1	Kwigizile et al. (2020)	
2	Metta et al. (2020)	
3	Nyengarika et al. (2020)	
4	Lyimo (2020)	<b>Journal</b>
5	Lindert et al. (2021)	
6	Chuwa (2023)	
7	Moshi and Tilisho (2023)	
8	Kapileh (2019)	
9	Saidi (2020)	
10	Mbeyu (2020)	<b>Thesis</b>
11	Mgomera (2021)	
12	Kinabo and Eduful (2021)	

The findings were obtained through vigorous literature reviews of relevant information on teenage pregnancy rates and associated factors. Numerous sources were

identified in the literature review, however, only 12 publications were relevant to the subject matter. These resources were gathered from diverse platforms, including Google Scholar, Open Access Repositories, and JSTOR, using keywords such as "factors that contribute to teenage pregnancy." To ensure the currency and relevance of the literature, materials published before 2019 and those that lacked relevant information on the factors contributing to teenage pregnancy were systematically excluded from the analysis. Ultimately, 7 journals and 5 master theses, making a total of 12 studies, conducted in Tanzania in the time span of 2019-2023, were assessed to identify commonalities and disparities in the findings.

## 4. Results and Discussion

A comprehensive exploration into the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in Tanzania necessitates a thorough review of existing literature to shed light on the multifaceted factors influencing this societal concern. In pursuit of this understanding, a thorough examination of scholarly works was undertaken, revealing a total of 12 research studies that align closely with the objectives of this investigation. These studies, conducted within the Tanzanian context, offer valuable insights into the intricate web of elements contributing to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy.

### 4.1. Educational and Policy Factors

**School drop-out.** 16.7% of the research reviewed in Lindi and Dodoma identified that the lower the level of education, the higher the chance of a female teen getting pregnant. In Tanzania, 329,918 students dropped out of school in 2022, whereas, 66,466 girls in secondary school and 81,239 girls in primary school. Geita, Tabora, and Kigoma are among the leading regions in primary school drop-out, while Mwanza, Geita, and Dodoma were leading regions in secondary school (The Chanzo Initiative, 2023). According to Ochen et al. (2019), the likelihood of teenage pregnancy among girls who were not attending school was significantly higher when compared with peers attending school ( $p < 0.001$ ). According to research conducted by Lindert et al. (2021), one of their KI explained that:

*“When children finish standard seven, it is time to get pregnant...now you have grown up. They finish at 13, 14, and 15 years.”* (Healthcare worker) D24



**Table 2***Findings on the causes of teenage pregnancies in the reviewed literatures in Tanzania*

	Area of study and number of respondents	Nature of study	Poor knowledge on sexual and reproductive health	Low economic status	Peer influence	Sexual abuse	Influence from social media	Family separation	School dropout	Poor parental monitoring	Moral decadence	Drug Abuse	Cultural factors
Kapileh (2019)	Arusha City, 107 respondents	Mixed approach		√	√		√	√					
Saidi (2020)	Dar es Salaam, 177 respondents	Mixed approach		√	√	√				√	√	√	
Mbeyu (2020)	Mbeya, 400 respondents	Mixed approach	√	√									√
Kwigizile et al. (2020)	Morogoro, 542 respondents	Mixed approach	√	√				√					√
Metta et al. (2020)	Mbeya, 165 secondary schoolgirls	Mixed approach	√	√							√		√
Nyangarika et al. (2020)	Ruvuma, 70 respondents	Mixed approach	√	√	√					√		√	
Lyimo (2020)	Arusha, 90 respondents	Qualitative approach		√		√	√				√		√
Mgomera (2021)	Mwanza, 100 respondents	Mixed approach	√	√				√					√
Lindert et al. (2021)	Lindi, (12 interviews)	Qualitative approach	√	√	√			√	√				
Kinabo and Eduful (2021)	Dar es salaam, (11 interviews)	Qualitative approach	√	√	√	√	√			√	√		
Moshi and Tilisho (2023)	Dodoma, 539 respondents	Quantitative approach	√	√	√	√			√				
Chuwa (2023)	Morogoro municipality, 250 respondents	Mixed approach	√	√									
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>9</b> <b>(75%)</b>	<b>12</b> <b>(100%)</b>	<b>6</b> <b>(50%)</b>	<b>4</b> <b>(33%)</b>	<b>3</b> <b>(25%)</b>	<b>4</b> <b>(33.3%)</b>	<b>2</b> <b>(16.7%)</b>	<b>3</b> <b>(25%)</b>	<b>4</b> <b>(33.3%)</b>	<b>2</b> <b>(16.7%)</b>	<b>5</b> <b>(41.7%)</b>

**Poor information on sexual and reproductive health.** From table 2, 75% of researchers have identified poor knowledge on sexual and reproductive health as among the causes of teenage pregnancies. Knowledge on sexual and reproductive health for adolescents has been debatable over the years, as some research ascertain that the knowledge will push girls and boys towards sexual behaviours and is against African culture (Bilinga & Mabula, 2014) while some believe that the equipment of the knowledge will avoid pregnancy (Kagashe & Honest, 2013). Nyangarika et al. (2020) add that sexual and reproductive health should be incorporated into the curricula of study.

According to Lyimo (2020), the lack of appropriate information leads to misunderstandings of emotions, which causes interchange of the description of 'love' with 'sex', therefore engaging in sex as a usual act. However, several studies (Lindert et al., 2021; Nkata et al., 2009) found parents frequently ignore their responsibility to carry out reproductive health education, as some assume their role to their children are limited to the provision of food, clothing, shelter, and education. According to research conducted by Kapinga and Hyera (2015), one of their Key Informant (KI) explained that,

*“This education encourages pupils to engage in sexual matters, especially after being taught things they did not know. We have caught pupils attempting to practice sex in school”* (Female Teacher, May 22, 2013).

#### **4.2. Individual Factors**

**Peer Influence.** Mgomera (2021) used the social learning theory to explain that people acquire new behaviours by observing from those around or nearby. From this perspective, they came up with decisions resulted from what they observed from those surroundings. 50% of the reviewed documents identified peer influence as a cause of teenage pregnancy. Some girls join peer groups that encourage promiscuity rather than academics.

Sexual behaviour is one of the many areas in which teens are influenced by their best friends and peers. Teens are more likely to have sex if they believe their friends have more positive attitudes toward childbearing, have permissive values about sex, or are having sex (Sik, 2015). Furthermore, Malisa (2015) adds that when teen does not feel that she can talk to her parents about sex either because they forbid sex talk or because they are not around, she

will more than likely turn to friends for direction on whether or not to have sex, resulting in misinformation and possible teen pregnancy. According to research conducted by Omari (2021), one of their KI explained that;

*“I have now decided to meet my friends after school. My friends can help me with many things, including issues related to sex and relationships. So, I will meet them in the evening, and I might report back to my parents if they are available. My parents are very busy, so I cannot wait for them to come back and help me with the questions I have. My friends will help me solve my problems”* (Teenage girl, 17 years, Mbagala kwa Azizi Ally Ward).

***Influence from social media.*** 25% of the research found that globalisation is among the reasons for teenage pregnancies. Technology and social media (particularly via cell phones) have really connected people. Cell phone usage promotes easy communication among peers and their partners and also gives them easy access to the internet which they use without regulation, to surf explicit content motivating early sex (Yakubu & Salisu, 2018). Furthermore, social media play a significant role in shaping the behaviour and mindset of teenagers. It has the power to influence their attitudes towards relationships, sex, and pregnancy. Social media provide teenagers with easy access to explicit content, including sexual content. With just a few clicks, they can find information, images, and videos related to sex and pregnancy. It can also perpetuate harmful stereotypes and misconceptions about sex and pregnancy, further contributing to misinformation and risky behaviours (Socialstar, 2023).

Furthermore, Saidi (2020) narrated that female students with phones said that their parents did not know they own mobile phones. The researcher inquired where they hid the phones, and the students replied that they hide them in the shops around the school as they knew that they were not allowed to be with phones in the school premises. Without the support of parents to run the operational costs of the phones, most teens resort to finding help from their partners (boyfriends or sugar daddies).

According to research conducted by Olenja et al. (2020), one of the KI explained that,

*“Mostly these days it is at home, because, like we said earlier, nowadays we have phones, so even when parents are there, you are communicating through text, and when the parents leave home, you call him to come” (FGD Girls 1-R8).*

*“Even in the bushes when collecting firewood because some girls are forbidden to meet up with boys” (FGD Girls 2 R4).*

*“We just organise over the phone, and we meet on the market day ... The boy pays the lodging, and we get in there without anyone complaining” (IDI Ever Pregnant girl).*

**Moral decadence.** 33.3% of the studies determined that moral decadence is among the causes of teenage pregnancy. According to Wado et al. (2019), early sexual debut is measured by the proportion of adolescents who have ever been sexually active. Omari (2021), on the role of traditional methods and a case management approach in preventing teenage pregnancy in Tanzania, determined that what girls and boys had learned during traditional ceremonies was undone with new technologies and modernization, which changed their behaviour and made them think differently about relationships and the accountability of their lives.

Low self-esteem is among the factors that lead to teenage pregnancies. For example, pregnant teenage girls have been found to have a lower self-concept in relation to moral, family, and social dimensions. Subsequently, teens experiencing moral decay may engage in risky behaviours, including unprotected sexual activities, without fully considering the potential consequences. This risk-taking behaviour increases the likelihood of unintended pregnancies. According to Christopher and Sanga (2023), in Tanzania, there is a need to make moral education compulsory and part of the curriculum, and apply different methods of moral formation and transformation that would help the corrupted students. According to research conducted by Mkumbugo et al. (2020), one of the KI explained that,

*“There are some school adolescents who engage in risky behaviours that originated from home; they are not serious in their study. We don’t care if they get pregnant” (T1, male, 58 aged years).*

**Drug abuse.** Individual factors that influence adolescent pregnancies include excessive use of alcohol and substance abuse. 16.7% of the studies determined that drug abuse is among the causes of teenage pregnancy. In Tanzania, the lifetime prevalence of substance use among school-going adolescents (11–17 years) was 7%, with alcohol at 4.5% and drugs (3.1%), specifically marijuana, amphetamines, or methamphetamines, being the most used. In the Kilimanjaro region, cigarettes (15.5%), alcohol (9.2%), and marijuana (3%) were the most commonly used substances among school-going adolescents (Mavura et al., 2022). This behaviour makes adolescent girls vulnerable and an easy target for sexual exploits.

According to Nyangarika et al. (2020), the use of drugs affects teens' brain systems in such a way that it becomes difficult to make the right decisions. It leaves them vulnerable to being raped or engaging in unsafe sex. Young people are twice as likely to have unprotected sex while under the influence of alcohol or drugs compared to when they are sober, which ultimately leads to pregnancy and the risk of HIV infection. This is consistent with previous findings, which reported an association between high-risk sexual behaviour, adolescent pregnancy, and substance abuse (Yakubu & Salisu, 2018).

According to research conducted by Saidi (2020), one of the KI explained that,

*“The effects of alcohol and drugs increase sexual arousal and desire, decrease inhibition and tenseness, diminish decision-making capacity, judgement and sense of responsibility, and generally disempower women to resist sex.”*

### **4.3. Family Dynamics and Community Factors**

**Poor parenting.** 25% of the studies highlighted the issue of poor parental monitoring as one of the causes of teenage pregnancies in Tanzania. This is mainly due to parents' focus on revenue creation activities to sustain family needs thus forgetting the emotional needs of the children. According to Nyangarika et al. (2020), schoolgirls who do not get parental care seem to find another person to give care. Some parents are so harsh to their children that they beat them hard, shout at them, forced them to work, and show no love at all. According to research conducted by Lindert et al. (2021), one of their KI explained that;

*“Her mother and father separated. The father doesn't know how to take good care of her, so she left school. After leaving school, she got pregnant.”*

(Pregnant teenager) D13

According to research conducted by Kombania (2019), one of their KI explained that;

*“You find the parent wakes up at dawn and comes back at night. When a parent leaves the house, they don't even know whether their children slept at home or not. In short, these types of working conditions subject a parent to no time to know the whereabouts of children.”*

Nonetheless, not enough literature has assessed the relationship between poor parental monitoring and teenage pregnancies in the Tanzanian context.

**Family separation.** 33.3% of the research collected from the literature review confirmed that family separation is a cause of teenage pregnancy. A study conducted by Mauna (2015) showed that 50 (45%) of the respondents who live with relatives/alone practised sexual intercourse, while 31 (28%) who live with single parents practised sexual intercourse, compared to 30 (27%) of respondents who live with both parents. Furthermore, another study by Uwizeye et al. (2020) indicated a positive association between teen girls being raised by single mothers and widows with adolescent pregnancy. Furthermore, it was observed that teen girls with both parents are less likely to get pregnant compared to those whose parents are divorced or separated. According to research conducted by Dunor (2015), one of the KI explained,

*“My father used to leave us with our mother and be away for a long time without leaving any money at home. As for me, I had a boyfriend who was selling goods at the market; he used to give me money. I used to share the money with my mother and my younger sister. I got pregnant last year and dropped out of school. I really wanted to study and become a doctor. I am not sure of that dream anymore”* (School dropout aged 17, Mtwara Municipality, October 27, 2014).

**Cultural factors.** Some cultures limit women’s decision-making power, making men assume control over sexual decisions. Cultural factors are among the causes of teenage pregnancy identified in 41.7% of the research works. According to Thobejane (2015), in some cultures, it is important for young girls to fall pregnant at an early age to prove their fertility prior to marriage. In African cultures, it is believed that a boy must go to initiation school to be given lessons about manhood. These lessons may have an unintended purpose of leading them into early sexual activities. According to research conducted by Lindert et al. (2021), one of their KI explained that;

*“I love you; I need you here; I need something... Saying no is not an option. Men are always like this in Africa.”* (Pregnant teenager) D95

*“Conservative traditions such as Unyago contributes to early pregnancy due to the teachings... marriage and pleasing men; they are taught how to do that. So at the end of the day, they practise it, and they get pregnant at an early age.”* (girl without a pregnancy before the age of 20) D104

**Sexual violence.** 33.3% of the research in Tanzania found that sexual abuse is a major cause of teenage pregnancy. Approximately 15 million adolescent girls (aged 15–19) worldwide have experienced forced sexual intercourse or other sexual acts at some point in their lives (World Vision, 2019). According to Paul (2018), many girls fall pregnant while in school from rape or abuse, and many face sexual harassment on a daily basis and resort to silence as there is no proper mechanism to help victims. Furthermore, in a study conducted by the Centre of Diseases Control and Prevention (2018) in Tanzania, the most common perpetrators of sexual violence on girls were neighbours, followed by strangers, and then dating partners. According to research conducted by Oluseye (2021), one of their KI explained that;

*“When I was going to school, I had a boyfriend. He always wanted sex, but I used to deny him. One day he told me to come and visit him at home, so I went to greet him, and suddenly he locked the door of his room and raised the volume of the speakers, and he forcefully raped me. This led to my pregnancy.”* Tutu (pregnant at 15 years, interviewed at 27 years).

According to research conducted by McCleary-Sills et al. (2013), one of their KI explained that;

*“If a boy wants you for sex, he will get you no matter how many times you say ‘no’ to him and try to avoid him every time you see him coming near. It doesn’t matter if you don’t want him; it matters that he wants you.”* (PLA participant, 15–17-year-old group)

According to research conducted by Lyimo (2020), one of their KI explained that;

*My cousin raped me during school holidays when my aunt left us for a relative funeral in a distant village. I reported it to my family, but he denied responsibility. Three months later, I tested positive for pregnancy and was expelled from school. My father reported it to the police, but unfortunately, it was too late to have medical evidence. Therefore, he was set free, and I became a burden to my family.* (In-depth interview).

According to research conducted by Human Rights Watch (2023), one of their KI explained that;

*“There are teachers who engage in sexual affairs with students; I know many [girls] it has happened to... If a student refuses, she is punished. I feel bad ... Even if you report the matter, it won’t be taken seriously. It makes us feel unsafe. Three girls dropped out because of teachers and sex in 2015.”* Joyce, 17, Shinyanga, northern Tanzania

#### **4.4. Economic Factors**

**Low economic status.** All the reviewed secondary data confirmed that among the major causes of teenage pregnancies is poverty, which forces girls to engage in sexual relations mostly with older men to meet basic needs such as food and clothing. Young girls who indulge in sexual relations due to poverty believe that the only asset they have to generate income is their bodies. Furthermore, in many societies, poverty pressures parents to give their young girls into early marriage (Mbeyu, 2020). According to research conducted by Karumuna (2019), one of their Key Informant (KI) explained that;



*“Poverty is also a factor which contributes greatly to adolescent pregnancy...Girls can fall into adolescent pregnancy while finding what she wants since her family failed to provide some of her needs, especially luxury things like chips, smartphones, and clothes...”* (Interview with respondent, August 11, 2019)

According to research conducted by Mgomera (2021), one of their Key Informant (KI) explained that;

*“It is very common for many students, especially girls, to walk more than ten to fifteen kilometres to and from school.... a girl can resist for some time, it comes a time where cannot hold on, due to hunger or other reasons”* (A social welfare officer, 2020).

According to Ntegwa and Miho (2021) findings on the determinants of teenage pregnancy and childbearing, teenagers from richer households are less likely to have pregnancies and bear children.

## **5. Conclusion**

Based on the comprehensive review conducted, three primary factors contributing to the prevalence of teenage pregnancy in the researched regions have been identified. These factors include inadequate knowledge about sexual and reproductive health, socioeconomic challenges, and the influential role of peer groups. In poor knowledge on sexual and reproductive health, it has been consistently observed in multiple studies, particularly those conducted since the year 2020, that a significant factor contributing to teenage pregnancies is the insufficient awareness and knowledge regarding sexual and reproductive health. Despite advancements in technology and increased accessibility to information, a notable gap persists in the understanding of crucial aspects related to sexual health among teenagers. This knowledge deficit poses a considerable risk and underscores the need for targeted educational interventions. Furthermore, in low economic status, the research findings consistently highlight the correlation between low economic status and teenage pregnancies. Female teenagers hailing from economically disadvantaged backgrounds encounter limited opportunities for personal and economic advancement. This vulnerability is exacerbated by

ingrained gender norms, wherein male dominance prevails, hindering the ability of young women to uplift their socioeconomic conditions. Consequently, the economic challenges faced by these teenagers contribute significantly to the incidence of teenage pregnancies. Lastly, peer influence is third most common cause determined. Notably, the impact of peer influence, both within immediate social circles and through online platforms, has emerged as a prominent instigator of teenage pregnancies. The power dynamics within teenage friend circles play a pivotal role, extending beyond traditional associations with schoolmates and neighbourhood friends to encompass online interactions with social media influencers and potential online predators. This influence from various sources underscores the need for a comprehensive approach to address the multifaceted nature of peer pressure in the context of teenage pregnancies.

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# The struggle of women's civic organization in the Indigenous community: A case study of Bontoc Women's Brigade

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## Abstract

The study explored the obstacles faced by women's civic organizations operating within indigenous communities. By focusing on the revitalization of the Bontoc Women's Brigade (BWB), the study aims to ignite a wave of positive transformation, motivating other grassroots organizations and community members to participate actively in endeavors aimed at improving safety, fostering well-being, and advancing sustainable development. The study aims to highlight critical needs requiring attention for revitalizing these organizations, akin to their initial establishment. By addressing these challenges and providing strategic initiatives, the research endeavors to contribute to the sustainable revival of women's civic organizations within indigenous communities. The study used a dual approach, utilizing focus group discussions and in-depth interviews, to gather data from participants with age ranging from 50 to 70 years old, who were members of the BWB in the Mountain Province, Philippines. This study used a descriptive qualitative research method, employing interview guides to facilitate data collection. The findings revealed that the organization faced challenges leading to its decline, notably the aging and passing away of members. Additionally, the younger generation exhibited limited interest due to the perceived lack of tangible benefits. Furthermore, gender-specific challenges and cultural norms significantly influence the activities of the BWB. These factors encompass traditional gender roles, stereotypes, issues related to women's empowerment, and safety concerns. The interplay of these elements introduces complexity to the organization's dynamics, emphasizing the need for a nuanced understanding of these challenges in order to effectively navigate and address them.

**Keywords:** *women's civic organization, indigenous communities, organizations dynamics, demographic challenges, women leadership*

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## 1. Introduction

The Bontoc Women's Brigade (BWB) is a remarkable community initiative that has played a pivotal role in maintaining peace and order within the indigenous community of Bontoc in the Philippines (Pabotoy, 2021; Diana & Caguioa, 2012). The BWB, composed of dedicated women from the community, has historically served as a critical bridge between the local populace and law enforcement, offering support, mediation, and conflict resolution services (Palangchao, 2009). Their involvement was initiated through a public hearing that addressed social issues like alcoholism and curfew ordinances. While the BWB has been an essential component of community safety and well-being, it has encountered challenges that have hindered its effectiveness (Empian, 2016). Hence, studies are crucial to shed light on these challenges and identify the needs of its members.

The role of BWB has been invaluable in maintaining the peace and stability of the community, earning them the respect and trust of the community members (Pabotoy, 2021; Palangchao, 2009). While it has historically played a significant role, there had been signs of decline in their effectiveness (Chonchonen & Viteno, 2012). Understanding the factors contributing to their inactivity and identifying the needs of its members is crucial for revitalizing their role and ensuring the continued well-being of the community. In addition, the BWB has played a crucial role in the community's peace and order maintenance. However, this remarkable organization faces a unique set of challenges that have led to periods of inactivity. In recent times, they have faced various challenges that have led to a decrease in their activity and influence (Pabotoy, 2021) including the changing social dynamics, generational shifts, and an evolving legal landscape. Understanding these challenges is key to addressing its needs and revitalizing its mission to ensure continued success. According to Ravaghi et al. (2023), community organizations, such as BWB, should implement needs assessments to evaluate the current situation, identify gaps and develop possible solutions.

The importance of the study lies in the intrinsic importance of revitalizing and enhancing the effectiveness of the BWB within the Indigenous community. As it represents a vital avenue for women's empowerment and participation in community affairs, revitalizing it not only strengthens the sense of agency and leadership but also promotes gender equality and social inclusivity within the Indigenous community. Through concerted efforts to

revitalize and enhance the effectiveness of the BWB, this study seeks to contribute to the overall well-being and development of the Indigenous community, reaffirming its resilience, strength, and collective spirit. Hence, this study evaluated the current situation of the BWB exploring on the factors contributing to its inactivity.

## **2. Literature Review**

### ***2.1. Women leadership in indigenous community***

Leadership is the ability of a superior to influence the behavior of a subordinate or group and persuade them to follow a particular course of action (Forester et al., 2022; Galanaki et al., 2018). In the past, many women have struggled to find acceptance in the workplace because of societal expectations, generalizations and stereotypes (Agarwal et al., 2020). However, women gradually made leadership presence at regional, national, and global levels; they made enormous strides in several formerly male-dominated industries and are excelling in leadership roles (Govinda, 2006). Women are now resolved to break the traditional glass ceiling that barred them from entering leadership positions even if they possessed requisite skills and talent to occupy them. In the current global community, women's leadership is very essential (Furst & Reeves, 2008).

According to studies, organizations led by inclusive leadership teams make effective decisions that deliver better results (Bourke & Titus, 2019; Li & Tang, 2022; Ashikali et al., 2021). In the twenty-first century, the essential qualities required to lead include the ability to collaborate, connect, empathize and communicate (Lloyd-Walker & Walker, 2011); qualities that are feminine in nature. Alqahtani (2020) argues that leadership by women is vital to increase the pace of societal transformation at home and in the workplace. Women leaders are likely to provide an integrated view of work and family, resulting in an engaged and promising personal and professional future (Acevedo-Duque et al., 2021). Gender parity in leadership is important because true progress cannot happen without a diversity of perspective in leadership roles (Alqahtani, 2019).

In the Indigenous community, women's central role as critical leaders involves more than leadership struggles of the past (Minthorn & Shotton, 2019). In fact, Defriend and Cook (2023) describe traditional matriarchal leadership with the relationship of the system and its components. For instance, the history of the Cordillera in the Philippines is not complete if

the role of the indigenous women in the struggle for the protection of their communities is trivialized. The role of pre-colonial women in earlier Kalinga was narrated by Infante (1975) that Kalinga women are not barred from belonging to the highest rank of society, which entitles them to the privileges equal to those of men in similar rank. Some are recognized as pact holders and as she is the one who owns the pact, only her children or relatives have the right to inherit it (Palangchao, 2009; Empian, 2016). The courage and resilience of indigenous women have not only inspired Cordilleran women and advocates but have also ignited research, education, and community activities aimed at benefiting their localities. In this context, the BWB, a civil volunteer organization founded in 2002 in Bontoc, Mountain Province, stands as a beacon of bravery and determination in the pursuit of peace and order. Comprising elderly women, the BWB defied traditional gender roles to address issues concerning the peace and security of their municipality.

## *2.2. Community dynamics and civic organizations*

Globalization has introduced numerous advantages, such as increased connections among countries through the exchange of people, goods, and information (Ullah et al., 2024). The transformations within the community, driven by globalization, have brought about both societal benefits and negative repercussions (Vuolajärvi, 2023). These shifts have contributed to changes in social relations and have sometimes led to the erosion of cultural diversity and identity (Tomlinson, 2017). While this interconnectivity has exposed communities to various cultures and created new relationships, it has also influenced and altered local cultures (Sadaka et al., 2023). The exposure to and adoption of global culture can have both positive and negative effects on cultures worldwide, leading to cultural diffusion, homogenization, and cultural erosion (Olivie & Gracia, 2020).

According to Broden (2006), due to the dramatic growth of international population flows in search of better opportunities, lifestyles, jobs, and incomes, the last decades have been characterized as a migration explosion. The relocation of people on their own choice, often referred to as self-initiated expatriation, from less to more developed countries has become a widespread phenomenon (Hill, 2023). The international migration of the workforce presents both opportunities and challenges for societies, organizations, and individuals. In addition, societies follow a linear path of development, transitioning from traditional lifestyles to industrialization. It posits a predictable evolution, progressing through distinct

stages of development, involving changes in social, economic, and political structures as societies industrialize and adopt advanced technologies (Raina et al., 2013).

The unexpected environmental disturbance, exemplified by the COVID-19 pandemic, significantly impacted people, particularly in terms of local social relationships (Kadykalo et al., 2022). The pandemic resulted in a decrease in the number of volunteers, with many feels unsafe about participating in activities (Ayalon et al., 2020). Moreover, numerous volunteer stations and collaborating organizations closed their doors to the public or halted volunteer activities due to social distancing measures (Akinwotu, 2020). This highlights the importance of cultivating attributes that are adaptable to change through the implementation of planned strategies, mitigating the potentially detrimental impact of such external shocks on individuals (Schmidt-Sane et al., 2023).

### ***2.3. Resource mobilization and need-based motivation***

Resource mobilization underscores the crucial role of strategic actions and efficient resource allocation in the success of social movements. These essential resources encompass the material, human, social organizational, cultural, and moral dimensions (Duong, 2017). The resource allocation delves into how social movements organize and deploy these resources, establishing a direct link between resource utilization and the success of a social organization (Alvarez & Barney, 2002).

The lack of sustainability, particularly in terms of funding and benefits is reflected in limited resources, a deficiency in sustained support from external stakeholders, and challenges in maintaining volunteers' commitment over time, making it difficult to sustain activities and projects (Baker & Nelson, 2005; Barney, 2001). These problems may suggest the presence of moral and cultural challenges faced by the civic organization, aligning with the broader context of the resource mobilization, which recognizes the importance of not only material resources but also cultural and moral aspects in the success of social movements (Gupta et al., 2018).

Need-based motivation is built upon the fundamental needs that must be fulfilled for individuals to be motivated (Rahman, 2013). These needs encompass physiological needs (basic human maintenance and defense, including hunger, thirst, and safety), social needs (feeling accepted, fostering friendships, achieving status, and connecting with others), the

need for belonging (functioning in a social setting and performing), and self-actualization (expressing oneself, being creative, developing personally through knowledge, problem-solving, and exploration, and using and expressing one's abilities) (Bombaerts, & Spahn, 2021). The desire for programs and seminars of an organization that reflect on the sacrifices made, aligning with the concept of self-actualization and the need for personal development and expression is applied to understand the challenges faced by a certain civic organization, focusing particularly on self-actualization, social needs, and the need for recognition and reinforcement. Applying this psychological lens provides insights into the motivations and struggles of the organization's members (Danowitz, 2016).

### **3. Methodology**

This study employed qualitative descriptive research design, specifically a case study that involves extracting meaningful insights from non-numerical data gathered from a specific phenomenon within its real-life context. The BWB, as well as the local residents, provided precise and comprehensive details regarding the study's primary objectives. These objectives centered on identifying the challenges and needs of the BWB. Moreover, the study utilized thematic analysis, characterized by its thorough and meticulous examination of a phenomenon, flexibility in data collection, and a structured, staged research process (Newcomer et al., 2023).

In order to gain deeper insights into the variables that influenced their inactive performances to the preservation of community peace and order, the researchers employed focus groups and conducted in-depth interviews to the members of the Women's Brigade in Bontoc, and the residents within the community of Bontoc, Mountain Province, specifically on the four (4) adjacent Barangays namely: Bontoc Ili, Caluttit, Samoki and Poblacion where the Bontoc Women's Brigade was instituted.

To ensure comprehensive and meaningful data collection, the research team engaged with key informants, including both residents and Women's Brigade members, through a combination of focus group discussions (FGD) and in-depth interviews. The researchers reached out to the Bontoc community through the barangay officials, seeking their assistance in identifying suitable individuals. The participants' availability and willingness to engage were discussed in-depth, and the researchers took this opportunity to explain the study's

objectives and privacy policies. It was emphasized that participants' responses would remain private and confidential, not shared with other participants.

The data gathering process adhered to rigorous ethical standards characterized by respectful and collaborative approach to engaging with the community in Bontoc. Prior to conducting the data gathering, the researchers obtained consent from the residents and informants emphasizing the importance of voluntary participation, anonymity, and confidentiality. The consent form not only conveyed the essence of voluntary involvement but also included the researcher contact information to address any participant queries. Throughout the interview and group discussion, participants were reminded of their absolute right to withdraw at any moment if they experienced discomfort. This commitment to participant autonomy and comfort was paramount, with a clear assurance that withdrawal would have no adverse consequences on their part and would not affect the study's outcome. In addition, the results of the study were communicated to the participants in a transparent and ethical manner. The discussion of the results to the community ensured that participants were not only engaged in the research process but also informed of its outcomes, thus upholding the principles of transparency and reciprocity in ethical research conduct. Lastly, the ethical process enabled the researchers to collect rich and valuable data from a diverse set of participants, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the Women's Brigade's role and challenges in the Indigenous community.

Thematic analysis was employed to extract insights from the gathered data. The interview transcripts were meticulously transcribed into text format. The researchers employed a systematic coding procedure, whereby each statement from the transcript was examined, analyzed, and assigned codes that accurately described the content. These codes were identified based on common themes and significant patterns in the data, ensuring that the most prevalent topics and issues were captured.

#### **4. Result and Discussions**

This segment encompasses the feedback provided by various stakeholders, including the Bontoc Women's Brigade, local residents, individuals in positions of authority, and members of various organizations, Office of the Senior Citizens Affair (OSCA). These insights were obtained through the utilization of focus group discussions and in-depth



interviews, enabling participants to address the series of inquiries aligned with the three primary objectives.

#### ***4.1. Challenges that led BWB inactive in their duty performance***

Women's empowerment encompasses the promotion of women's self-esteem, their capacity to autonomously make decisions, and their entitlement to effect positive change in society, both for themselves and others. Therefore, it becomes imperative to adopt various approaches that facilitate their active engagement in an enabling environment. In this context, the following discussions outlines the obstacles encountered by the BWB. Some participants have identified these challenges as a significant hurdle and made significant efforts to address these issues. While members willingly volunteer their time, acquiring essential equipment and training remains an ongoing challenge for the organization. The BWB encounters challenges rooted in societal and cultural norms, limited resources, the need to ensure the well-being of their elderly members, and the demands of their multifaceted mission.

##### ***4.1.1 Demographic key challenges***

The BWB's lack of activity can be attributed to a range of challenges, such as the loss of members, scarcity of dedicated volunteers, older members experiencing physical limitations, and insufficient ongoing support concerning funding and benefits.

***Absence of passionate volunteers.*** It was noted that the absence of passionate volunteers has significantly impacted the Women's Brigade, as there has been no one to step in and carry the torch of volunteerism with the same zeal. The passion for volunteerism was only evident among the older members, not followed by the new generation of young adults who could potentially take their place. The shifting dynamics of modern society have weakened traditional values, as indicated by the BWB, this observation aligns with the sentiment expressed by those who find the most common reason for the lack of passion for volunteerism is the scarcity of free time and a sense of undervaluation. As a volunteer, it is essential to possess the skills that foster motivation and unwavering commitment, alongside qualities such as leadership and teamwork. While motivating young people to engage in volunteer work is a noble pursuit, it is vital to remember that simply compelling them to participate in community work may not suffice to create a lasting impact. As Barrachina et

al. (2021) noted, the process of involving individuals in community service does not result in their disengagement. Effective organizations have leaders who actively participate and work to mobilize the organization towards a common purpose, not remaining passive bystanders (Mohammad & Hossein, 2006).

This challenge aligns with the Need-Based Motivation Theory, specifically Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. This theory underscores the fundamental requirements that must be met for individuals to be motivated, encompassing social needs (feeling accepted, fostering friendships, achieving status, and connecting with others), the need for belonging (functioning in a social setting and performing), and self-actualization (expressing oneself, being creative, developing personally through knowledge, problem-solving, exploration, and using and expressing one's abilities). Therefore, the research posits that true passion emerges from the desire to make a difference, and the challenge lies in sustaining the energy and vitality of the organization with this motivation.

***Lack of funding and resources.*** Insufficient and inconsistent support in the form of funding and benefits were highlighted by a member of the Office of Senior Citizen Affairs. The informants also pointed out that during the peak of the organization, sustainability challenges arose due to inadequate funding, benefits, and over-reliance on social security contributions. Community-based organizations often grapple with the perpetual challenge of securing continuous funding. They initially lack the essential resources required to maintain their membership and carry out their activities effectively, making this a pressing concern that demands a proactive response. Numerous concerns have been raised regarding the qualifications and professional development of their services. When these organizations attempt to implement a training tailored to their specific needs, they often incur financial costs and invest substantial time in its execution. Regrettably, these expenses are then shifted to the services themselves, who frequently struggle to afford the necessary training and, as a result, may abandon their pursuit of it.

The financial constraint significantly impedes the capacity-building efforts of the organization. As a consequence, the absence of these critical resources negatively impacts the progress of the organization. This aligns with Resource Mobilization Theory, which underscores the pivotal role of strategic actions and efficient resource allocation in the success of social movements. These sought-after resources encompass material, human,

social-organizational, cultural, and moral aspects. It may also create a perception that the community and social institutions may not fully recognize or prioritize their needs. Financial assistance emerges as a crucial element in supporting the training and skill development of members, equipping them with the qualifications required to effectively manage programs and services (Carli & Eagly, 2016).

*Aging and members' attrition.* The BWB's activity decline can be attributed to several challenges, including the loss of members due to aging and physical limitations. The BWB members are elderly, the "twilight life" stage. Over time, members experience a decline in their abilities, making it difficult for them to perform their previous tasks. They were all aged and not functioning well; sometimes they could not even hear what people were talking about, further illustrates the impact of aging, which affects physical performance, mobility, and susceptibility to unpredictable illnesses. The participants' responses align with existing research, which indicates that aging has a profound influence on individuals' decisions to retire. Research on aging in the workplace has predominantly focused on understanding and managing age-related losses, such as declining cognitive and physical abilities or age-related discrimination (Scheibe et al., 2021). Furthermore, the changing demographics and the increasing prevalence of an aging workforce have several implications. These include issues related to stereotyping and discrimination, the longevity of on-site expertise, and variations in workplace behavior (Fraade-Blanar et al., 2017).

This is corroborated by research findings indicating that the youngest groups place more importance on status and freedom work values than the oldest group. Baby Boomers and the younger generations reported better person-organization values with extrinsic and status values than Generation X and Generation Y, but no other generational differences in fit were observed. When individual and organizational values demonstrated poor fit, there was reduced job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and increased intentions to turnover across all three generational groups (Cennamo & Gardner, 2008). The study highlights that older members of the Women's Brigade face limitations in their ability to engage in activities and social interactions. Consequently, age significantly impacts role performance, work behavior, and social interactions.

#### ***4.1.2. Internal challenges within the BWB***

The internal challenges within the organization that contributed to its inactivity includes recruitment and volunteer retention, conflicts and different priorities among members, and leadership and communication.

***Recruitment and volunteer retention.*** The challenge of recruiting new members within the organization has had a direct impact on its lack of activity. Additionally, volunteers' rapid attrition from participation in activities has negatively affected their commitment. The difficulties associated with member retention further exacerbate the organization's inactivity.

The informants underscore that, although the BWB exhibits commendable dedication in their endeavors, they grapple with recruitment and volunteerism. The departure of volunteers from nonprofit organizations at a time when social services are in demand can lead to significant financial shortfalls and societal repercussions (Yoo et al., 2023). Moreover, leadership roles for volunteers increase the likelihood of volunteer attrition. Various factors contribute to the challenges encountered in recruiting and retaining volunteers, including family and work commitments, educational pursuits, and other competing activities (Edeigba & Singh, 2022).

***Conflicts and differing priorities among members.*** An internal challenge that the BWB grapples with involves conflicts and varying priorities among its members, which can impede project implementation and decision-making processes. When individuals with diverse backgrounds and priorities collaborate within any organization, conflicts can naturally arise. These conflicts may manifest in various ways, such as verbal disputes, noncooperation, and frustration. They can be driven by differences in personalities, miscommunication, or even issues related to organizational management.

The members of the BWB engage in volunteering for various reasons, and these distinct motivations often correspond to their differing priorities. It is quite evident that conflicts occur in organizations as a result of competition for supremacy, leadership style, scarcity of common resources, etc. This reduces staff satisfaction about the job and also reduces productivity or service rendered. Thus, early recognition of the conflict and paying attention to the conflicting parties is very important. Negotiation between parties involved is

the best way to resolve conflict while force should not be used at all (Omisore & Abiodun, 2014).

***Gender expectations for Indigenous women.*** The informants delve into the potential effects of matters related to gender and cultural traditions within the Indigenous community on the involvement and effectiveness of BWB. These considerations encompass traditional gender expectations, stereotypes, the empowerment of women, and safety-related apprehensions. The informants have emphasized that gender-specific issues play a significant role in the organization's inactivity. Furthermore, the mission of the BWB, aimed at empowering women and addressing community concerns, is at risk of being misinterpreted. Recognizing the distinct challenges faced by Indigenous women is imperative. Traditional gender roles and expectations within the Indigenous community should be carefully considered, as they have a critical impact on the organization's mission and effectiveness. Additionally, participants have pointed out that issues such as traditional gender roles and stereotypes often hinder the organization's work.

As stated by the informants, these gender-specific issues are pertinent to the challenges they encounter. Gender-related matters within the BWB can impede the creativity and productivity of its members, affecting their overall performance. When women are excluded from decision-making and leadership positions, their ideas and perspectives often go unrecognized. Diverse inputs and experiences are essential for generating innovative ideas and problem-solving (Reese et al., 2023).

***Cultural norms related issues.*** These challenges rooted in cultural norms have had a notable impact on the inactivity of BWB. The informants underscored the importance of initiatives that not only promote women's empowerment but also address cultural norms and expectations. Additionally, as highlighted by the participants, cultural norms and expectations within the Indigenous community may impede BWB's ability to accomplish its objectives.

Since a significant portion of BWB members come from Indigenous communities, it is crucial to comprehend cultural norms to mitigate their impact on the organization. Norms vary across cultures, contributing to potential cross-cultural misunderstandings. Recognizing

these cultural norm differences is highly relevant, as it can help prevent conflicts that may arise due to a lack of understanding.

#### ***4.2. Needs of BWB members in the revival of duty performance***

These fundamental requisites encompass the imperative for skills-enhancing training, the provision of necessary resources, emotional sustenance to manage stress and avert burnout, and the recognition of their dedicated endeavors.

##### ***4.2.1 Primary needs***

The primary needs of BWB members, as expressed by the brigade themselves, revolve around the necessity for training, resources, and recognition of their previous efforts to strengthen their commitment and boost their effectiveness in their respective roles. Members take great pride in their actions and achievements. These mentioned needs are paramount for the continued operation and functionality of the Brigade. Offering them comprehensive training, allocating resources to support the members, and acknowledging their actions and accomplishments instills in them the belief that they are genuinely supported and valued for their contributions. These include the need for training to enhance their skills, access to necessary resources, emotional support to help them cope with stress and prevent burnout, and recognition of their tireless efforts.

The BWB is widely acknowledged as a volunteer group, and this recognition is often reinforced by media coverage. Various government offices, including municipal and congressional offices, have stepped in to provide essential supplies. The request for training stems from the understanding that it enhances knowledge and skills, making it a pivotal motivational factor. As a result, the BWB actively seeks training opportunities to augment their skill set and knowledge, ultimately enabling them to carry out their duties more effectively and efficiently.

##### ***4.2.2 Beneficial resources, training, and support system***

The BWB has formally petitioned the "*sangguniang panlalawigan*" (provincial board) to fortify and sustain their functionality by segregating them from the *tanod* (police officer) within the barangay, their current association. Their alignment with the *tanod* has limited the support and benefits they can receive from the DILG. Furthermore, members

have explicitly articulated their need for essential equipment, such as communication and transportation gear. They have also stressed the importance of self-care practices to ensure they can continue fulfilling their duties effectively. Training, specifically safety training and grant writing, has been underscored as vital by BWB members to enhance their capabilities. These programs play a significant role in aiding members with their responsibilities. There is also observed strong desire of BWB members for community support.

Given that BWB members are voluntary and unpaid, aligning them with the *tanod* through this resolution allows them to receive honorarium and other benefits. In the study of Galanaki et al. (2018), it is emphasized that having a robust support system yields numerous positive benefits, including higher levels of well-being and a longer, healthier life. In the context of BWB, this underscores the significance of providing the necessary support to sustain their valuable work.

#### ***4.2.3 Community and stakeholder support***

The informants delved into the strategies for the community and various stakeholders to adeptly cater to the requirements of BWB members. These strategies encompass financial backing, emotional encouragement, collaboration in fundraising endeavors, provision of training programs, monetary support, public acknowledgment, and supply of resources and logistical assistance for their undertakings.

***Funding.*** As articulated by the informants, the community and other stakeholders can support them by providing funding for training and necessary equipment. Before the BWB achieved a high level of activity through their valuable contributions to the community, they enjoyed wholehearted backing from the municipal, provincial, and even the office of the Congressman. The informants further corroborated that BWB was very active before because they were fully supported by the municipal and provincial offices, including the office of the Congressman. These types of organizations garner extensive backing from the community due to their substantial contributions to its prosperity. They provide emotional support and organize fundraising events as a way to reciprocate BWB's efforts. Philanthropic funders play an important role in human services—they support policy research and community services—but little is known about how they structure their funding or select grant recipients. The findings are supported by the study of Grønbjerg et al. (2000), based on their interviews

with Chicago-area foundation officials, which documented how four types of philanthropic funders approach decisions related to funding. The grant process is constrained by how funders obtain their resources and govern themselves. It is also constrained by ongoing relationships between funders and grant recipients, reflecting pervasive task ambiguity and weakly institutionalized norms. The result is a grant award system that resembles a two-stage competitive process.

***Emotional Support.*** As emphasized by the informants, the community can provide emotional support and assist in fundraising events. Bontoc serves as the headquarters of the BWB organization, and it enjoys a well-established reputation in the area. An organization that actively contributes to the welfare of the community certainly merits recognition and honors for its unwavering commitment.

Theoretical frameworks and research within the domain of lifespan developmental psychology underscore the notion that emotional development is an ongoing process, persisting even as individuals transition into adulthood and eventually old age. Various theories, such as socio-emotional selectivity theory (Chiarelli & Batistoni, 2021) expound on the mechanisms and trajectories of age-related shifts in emotional processes and outcomes. This result aligns with the Need-Based Motivation Theory, specifically Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. It emphasizes the fundamental requirements that must be fulfilled for people to be motivated, encompassing social needs, (feeling accepted, fostering friendships, achieving status, and connecting with others), and the need for belonging (functioning in a social setting and performing).

#### ***4.2.4 Expectations and requests from the Indigenous community and authorities***

Anticipations and desires from the Indigenous community and authorities as highlighted by the BWB members hold expectations of receiving acknowledgment for their contributions, a channel for expressing their concerns, and opportunities for collaboration with the community and relevant authorities to facilitate project execution. Furthermore, they look forward to increased community engagement and support from local governing bodies.

***Platform for voicing concerns.*** This brings the leadership role in employee voice into focus. Prior research has predominantly portrayed leaders as a vital aspect of the environment, influencing employees' psychological states and choices concerning whether to



articulate their concerns and raise issues. This also delves into the psychology of leaders and how their psychology, coupled with various structural constraints they encounter, contributes to their responses to employee voice. Additionally, it explores when leaders opt to engage in voice themselves, whether horizontally with fellow leaders, vertically to shape the culture within a group or set priorities for a group of subordinates, or externally to influence industry and customer stakeholders.

The implications are then extrapolated for future research and practical application. In the realm of business marked by increasing intricacy and rapid transformations, organizational voice confers adaptive advantages upon firms and their leaders (Danowitz, 2016; Benschop, 2021). Employee voice from various levels enhances and diversifies the pool of information available to organizational leaders for decision-making. Voice empowers leaders to swiftly gather information about a wide array of emerging issues, developments, and market trends (Benschop, 2021). It enables them to identify shortcomings in their organization's approaches to matters (Edeigba & Singh, 2022). Consequently, voice can be seen as a wellspring of organizational learning (Furst & Reeves, 2008). Research on procedural justice has demonstrated that allowing for voice prior to a decision heightens the perceived fairness of that decision (commonly known as the 'fair process').

***Greater community involvement.*** When a civic organization like the BWB actively engages with the community, it can have a more significant impact on addressing various issues and concerns. By involving community members in their initiatives, they can tap into local knowledge, resources, and support, making their efforts more effective. Greater community involvement helps build trust and rapport between the organization and the community it serves. When community members are directly engaged, they are more likely to trust and support the organization's work, fostering a positive and productive relationship. Community involvement can lead to long-term sustainability. When an organization is deeply rooted in the community and actively engages community members, it is more likely to receive continued support, both in terms of resources and volunteer contributions. Hence, requesting greater community involvement is a strategic move for the BWB as it can lead to a more significant impact, build trust, ensure sustainability, tap into local expertise, and facilitate resource mobilization, ultimately strengthening the organization's ability to fulfill its mission effectively (Killip, 2021).

*Support from authorities.* The BWB may lack the necessary resources, whether it's financial, material, or technical, to carry out their initiatives efficiently. By seeking support from the community and local authorities, they aim to access these resources. Local authorities may have budgets or access to funding that can be allocated to the BWB for their activities. Additionally, local businesses and community members may donate resources or provide in-kind support, such as equipment or facilities, which can significantly enhance the organization's capabilities. Collaboration with local authorities is essential to ensure that initiatives are aligned with local policies and regulations, which is crucial when they are involved in enforcing ordinances. Collaborating with authorities also promotes a unified and coordinated approach to community issues. The authorities can provide guidance, legal support, and legitimacy to the BWB's actions, reinforcing their role in maintaining peace and order.

Seeking support from the community means involving residents in the BWB's activities. This engagement fosters a sense of shared responsibility and ownership over community safety. It encourages community members to actively participate in and support the efforts, leading to more successful initiatives. Additionally, community members may offer valuable insights into local issues and provide feedback. By gaining support from both the community and local authorities, the BWB can establish itself as a respected and valued organization within the community. Public recognition enhances their credibility and encourages others to collaborate with and support their work. As a result, they are more likely to receive acknowledgment and appreciation for their dedication and commitment to community safety. The quest for support in terms of resources and collaboration with local authorities is a strategic approach to ensure they have the means to carry out their initiatives effectively, align their actions with local regulations, engage the community, and gain social recognition. These elements are crucial for the success and sustainability of the organization in its mission to maintain peace and order in the community.

## **5. Conclusion**

This study provides a comprehensive understanding of the challenges, needs, and expectations of the BWB. The findings highlight the importance of addressing the challenges comprehensively to revitalize and empower BWB members in their mission to enhance

peace, order, and development in the community. It is evident that BWB faces various challenges that have led to their inactivity in carrying out their duties. To effectively address these challenges and empower members, it is crucial to provide the necessary resources, support, and recognition. Collaborative efforts among the organization, the community, and local authorities can significantly contribute to its sustainability. Moreover, the organization need to explore crowdfunding, fundraising events, and government-assisted funding to ensure financial sustainability.

Based from the critical assessment of the current situation, it is imperative that the organization be registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), and accredited by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). With the support from the local government, the organization also needs to launch awareness campaigns to educate the community about their vital role and significance in maintaining peace and order. Further research and initiatives focused on gender empowerment, community collaboration, and resource mobilization are recommended to enhance the organization's impact and effectiveness.

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