FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO TEENAGE PREGNANCY: THE CASE OF KALUMA AND CHOWE VILLAGES, T/A JALASI, MANGOCHI. – ***By Sam Makuti & Mark Mwalabu***

**Introduction**

Teenage pregnancy refers to pregnancy that occurs in young girls, mostly in the range of age 13 to 19 years old. Nowadays teenage pregnancy has become a growing concern as it is contributing to early school dropout among girls and increases the financial burden on the parents.

**Objectives**

* To find out the factors that contributes to teenage pregnancy in T/A Jalasi
* To find out the effects of teenage pregnancy

**Methodology**

The research used simple random sampling to select respondents. 20 teenage mothers were interviewed and simple percentage rate was used to analyse the data that was collected.

**Results**

The results shows that, the age at which the teenagers engaged into sexual intercourse is too early and most of them get pregnant because of lack of knowledge on contraceptive methods. Some girls reported that they willingly got pregnant because of peer pressure since their peers have babies. Poverty is also one of the causes of teenage pregnancy, some parents’ force their children to get married because they cannot manage to support them financially and other girls indulge into early sexual relationships in search for basic essentials.

Teenage pregnancy leads to early school dropout among the girls, and 30% of the girls reported that they had difficulties when giving birth hence they had to undergo caesarean section. Teenage pregnancy also increases the financial burden on the teen’s parents since most of the teens after getting pregnant are dumped and it becomes the responsibility of the parents to look after them.

**Conclusion**

Teenagers should be enlightened about the consequences of teenage pregnancy and parents should take the responsibility of supporting their girl child to meet her needs. There is a need for awareness campaigns on issues of contraceptives use as it has been revealed that majority of teenage girls have no knowledge on contraceptive methods.

**Reflection**

There are more female headed households in T/A Jalasi since majority of the men/husbands have gone to South Africa in search for money hence this contribute to teenage pregnancy as there is little parental control on the girls. We also believe that there is a relationship between Chinamwali and teenage pregnancy because all the 20 girls indicated that they had their first sexual intercourse after coming from Chinamwali.