

A knowledge, attitude and practice study on registration of birth and death among the field practice area of department of community medicine B.J. Medical College, Ahmedabad

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Abstract

Objectives: A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted in a field practice area of community medicine department, BJMC in Ahmedabad city to determine awareness, attitude and practice of birth and death registration and to identify predictors affecting their practice and to educate the study group about the same.

Methods: A single adult person from each house was interviewed using semi-structured questionnaire in 153 houses selected by systematic random sampling in study area.

Results: The study showed that awareness of birth registration was high but inadequate in the study population and the major source of information is through relatives/neighbors. The awareness of death registration is however comparatively low. Out of the 108(70) households that had children below 10 years, total number of children below 10 years are 178 and 112 (68) of them had their births registered and produced certificate during the interview. Of the 41 households that recorded deaths in the household within the last 10 years but only 12 (30) households reported registering deaths in the last 10 years.

Conclusion: Registration of birth and death need to be complete for planning purpose, which is deficient as shown by this study. It is important to conduct further studies to identify ways forward towards improving birth and death registration in India.

Keywords: birth, death registration, Ahmedabad

1. Introduction

Civil Registration System popularly known as birth and death registration system is the recording of vital events births and deaths under the statutory provisions on continuous and permanent basis ^[1]. Birth registration is the first legal document in which the name of the child gets entered along with the name of the parents. The registration records are useful as legal documents and as a source of statistics ^[2]. For individuals, it is legal proof of age, identity, nationality, heritage and civil status. The importance of registration of births and deaths for national and local planning has received adequate attention. In INDIA birth and death registration started from the colonial era and is currently carried out by National Population Commission. The registration of births and deaths in India was made compulsory under the Registration of Births and Deaths (RBD) Act, 1969 ^[3].

Birth and death registration in developed countries is done well enough to be useful for determining population changes and planning, the situation in most developing countries is very poor ^[4]. Globally, every year 1 in 3 newborns of about 40 million children are born without being registered ^[5]. Six out of ten unregistered newborns are in South and South-east Asia. The current level of birth registration in India is 63.8% as per the latest 2005 provisional national estimates, which means that out of the estimated 26 million births taking place each year, approximately 9.4 million children (36.2%) go unregistered every year ^[6]. Very few studies have been conducted in communities in India to determine the extent to which these vital events are registered. Taking these facts into consideration, this study examined the awareness, attitude and

practices birth and death registration of those who are residing in Girdharnagar ward, a field practice area of Community Medicine Department BJMC Ahmedabad.

2. AIM & Objective

1. To assess the knowledge, attitude & practice regarding registration of births and deaths in study group.
2. To identify predictors affecting their practice.
3. To educate the study group regarding Registration of birth and death.

3. Materials and Method

A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted during the month of September-October 2016 in Girdharnagar ward, under the field practice area of the Department of Community Medicine, B.J. Medical College. For the purpose of this study, a convenient sample of 153 houses were selected by systematic random sampling from overall adopted families by medical social workers of community medicine of BJ Medical College, Ahmedabad. The information was taken from a single person preferably (mother, father, or anyone 18 years or above) after taking the consent of the individual.

Trained resident doctors collected information on the identification, socio-demographic profile, and awareness of the individual about birth registration (importance, ideal time, cost involved, etc.) using a structured questionnaire. Data was entered in an MS Excel™ spreadsheet and the findings are expressed in percentages. Analysis was done to produce frequency, mean and range.

4. Results

Table 1: Socio-demographic profile of study group.

Sr. no	Variable	N=153(100%)
1	Sex	Male 80 (52)
		Female 73 (48)
2	Economic status	APL 84 (55)
		BPL 69 (45)
3	Education	Illiterate 26 (17)
		Primary 47 (31)
		Secondary 48 (31)
		Graduate & above 32 (21)
4	Occupation	Male:- Unskilled 15 (19)
		Semi-skilled 45 (56)
		Skilled 20 (25)
		Female:- Housewife 65 (93)
		Unskilled 08 (07)
5	Caste	Open 45 (29)
		SEBC 63 (41)
		ST 10 (07)
		SC 35 (23)
6	Religion	Hindu 124 (81)
		Muslim 09 (06)
		Christian 08 (05)
		Other 12 (09)

*Figures in parenthesis show percentage value.

Of the 153 respondents interviewed 75 (49) were heads of households.

The mean age of respondents is 41.3 years. Out of total 153 respondents, 80 (52) of respondents were males while 62 (48) were females. 26 (17) of respondents had no formal education, 47 (31) had primary education, 48 (31) and 32 (21) had secondary education and graduation respectively. The respondents were predominantly Hindu 124(81) by religion and SEBC 63 (41), UNRESERVED 45 (29), SC 35 (25) and ST 10 (07) according to caste category. Out of total 80 males, 15 (19) were involved in unskilled worker, 45 (56) & 20 (25) in semi-skilled & skilled work respectively. Majority of the female (93) were housewife and rest are involved in unskilled work. Out of total 153 houses, 69 (45) falls into BPL category and rest 84 (55) in APL category.

131 (86) out of 153 respondents interviewed were aware that births are supposed to be registered. However, only 116 (76) were aware that deaths were supposed to be registered. About two-thirds 97 (63) of respondents had heard of the National Population Commission. Virtually 121 (79%) of respondents felt that registration of birth is a RIGHT of a child.

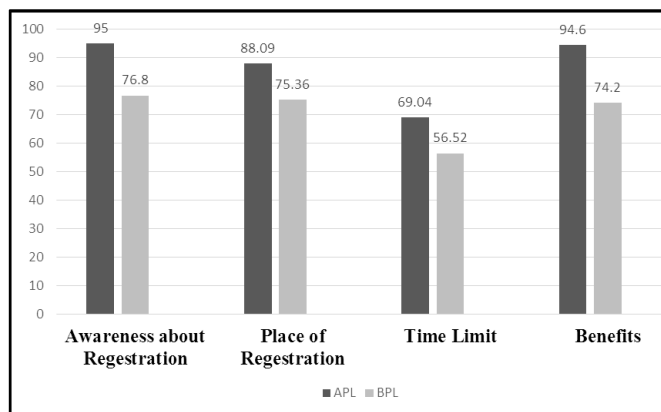


Fig 1: Awareness regarding birth registration.

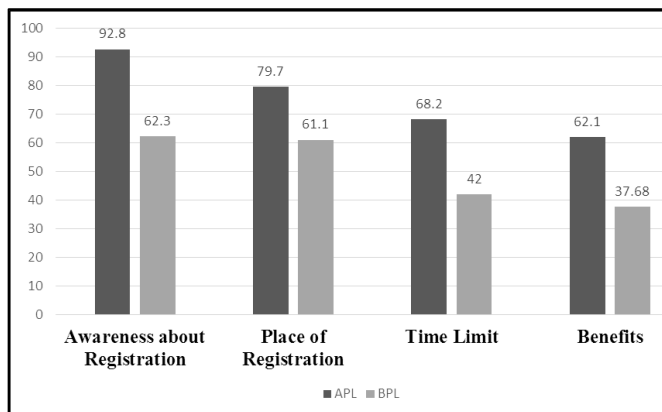


Fig 2: Awareness regarding death registration.

As per chart 1 and 2, we can comment that, there is less knowledge regarding registration of birth and death in BPL families than APL families. Knowledge regarding time limit to register birth is found in 69% APL families and in 55% BPL families. Knowledge regarding time limit to register death is found in 68% APL families and in 42% BPL families.

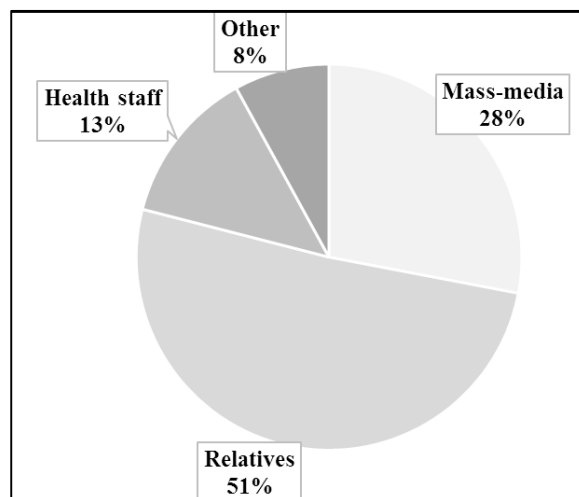


Fig 3: Source of information.

The participants reported their source of information about birth registration as relatives/neighbors 78 (51), mass media 43 (28), health personnel 20 (13) and other (8).

Out of total 153 respondents, only 74 (48) knows that registration of birth and death is free rest believes it needs money to do registration and to get certificate.

Table 2: Awareness about place of registration.

S. No.	Place of Registration	N=153(100%)	
		Birth	Death
1	Municipality office	66 (43)	68 (44)
2	hospital	61 (40)	36 (24)
3	Not aware	26 (17)	49 (32)

Most of the respondents, 66 (43) felt births are registered at the local government while 61 (40) felt birth registration is done at the hospital, while 26 (17) had no idea of where births are registered. Out of total 153, 68 (44) respondents felt

deaths were registered at the local government and 36 (24) at the hospital and 49 (32) had no idea about it.

Table 3: Awareness of respondents regarding the benefits of a birth registration.

S. No.	Benefits	
1	School admission	116 (76)
2	Obtaining a ration card	56 (37)
3	Obtaining passport	42 (27)
4	Not aware	20 (13)

Table 4: Awareness of respondents regarding the benefits of a death registration.

S. No.	Benefits	
1	Insurance policy	56 (37)
2	pension	60 (39)
3	Not aware	37 (24)

Table-3 shows the awareness level of the study population regarding the benefits of a birth registration are: School admission 116 (76), Ration card registration 56 (37), obtaining a passport 42 (27) and table-4 shows the awareness level of the study population regarding the benefits of a birth registration are: Enrolling for insurance policies 56 (37), pension schemes 60 (39). Out of total 153 respondents, 20 (13) and 37 (24) were not aware about the benefits of registration of birth & death respectively.

Out of the 153 households surveyed 108(70) had children below 10 years old and these households had a total of 178 children below 10 years, 112 (68) of them had their births registered and having birth certificate. Out of 153 households interviewed 41 (27) said they had recorded deaths in the household within the last 10 years and only 12 (30) households reported registering deaths in the last 10 years.

5. Discussion

The study was conducted in a field practice area of Community Medicine Department, B.J. Medical College, Ahmedabad. It involves people of various educational status, occupation, religion and caste.

Study finding shows the low awareness regarding the multiple use of birth certificates and importance of it as a legal might be due to significant percentage illiterate 26 (17) subjects or subjects having received only primary education 47(31).

Around 79 (52) of the respondents believed that registration of birth involves cost. Another study done by M Gupta shows only 13.3% participants believing the same. This difference might be attributed to difference in socio demographic profile [7]. This information could be the reason for delayed birth registration. The source of information was reported as relatives/neighbors by78 (51) of the participants and health personnel by 13 (20) of the respondents and the mass-media by 43 (28) of the respondents. This points toward the need for involvement of field health staff and increased IEC efforts through involvement of various type of mass communication including audio-visual and print media [8].

The study findings highlight that 112 (68) births in the last 10 years were registered in this study area. Another study done by M Gupta in semi-urban area of Delhi shows 44.2% births in last 5 years were registered [7]. Delay in birth registration may be due to the belief of large proportion of the study participants that the birth cannot be registered before deciding

the name of his/her child which might be decided after few weeks or months according to the rituals of the particular society.

Almost all respondents were aware of birth registration but only about two-third knows about the National Population Commission, which is the government agency for registration of births and deaths. One of the main reasons people in this study register births is to get a certificate to be used during school enrollment for their children or to get name registered in ration card or to get a passport in future. There appears to be little knowledge on why registration is necessary and the perception is often on the need based. It shows, they did not understand the importance of registration of births and deaths for national planning.

Study finding shows that awareness of death registration is low in compare to birth registration among the study population. Jewkes *et al* also reported low knowledge of death registration in Egypt [9]. Low awareness of death registration reflects in their practice as shown by this study in which about 112 (68) of children below 10 years in the households were registered and only 12 (30) of deaths that occurred within 10 years to the interview were reported to have been registered. Several studies have already reported serious under-registration of deaths in developing countries. Only fair coverage of birth registration will limit the use of data for proper planning, so to avoid this both birth and death registration should be encouraged.

6. Acknowledgement

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Above all, I thank the almighty for showering me with his blessings and love.

7. Conclusion and Recommendation

This study highlights that the awareness regarding birth and death registration is inadequate among the study population, which is evident by the low percentage of birth and death registration in the last 10 years. Efforts should be put towards the national target of achieving 100% registration of births by 2010 in accordance with the goal set by the National Population Policy, 2000 [10]. The role of media has to be strengthened in the form of newspaper articles, reports, advertisements, etc. so that more people realize the importance of this legal document. Link workers, health worker and Aanganwadi workers could be the best source to impart the awareness regarding birth and death registration. More studies need to be conducted to provide additional information and to use this to identify the way forward towards improving birth and death registration in India.

8. References

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