

**A STUDY ON KNOWLEDGE OF REGISTRATION OF BIRTH IN KAMRUP DISTRICT OF ASSAM**Papiya Das<sup>1</sup>**HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE:**

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**ABSTRACT:** Birth registration is a fundamental right and child who is denied is shut down of the society. He/she is being denied of an official identity. There is continuous lack of awareness regarding the importance of registration which is an important means of safeguarding the individual rights and violation of such shouldn't go unnoticed. **METHODS:** A cross sectional study was conducted in the Kamrup district of Assam using pre-designed, pre-tested questionnaire. **RESULTS:** It was found that 1110 (79.29%) of 1400 respondents had knowledge regarding birth registration and among them 717 (64.59%) were female and 393 (35.41%) were male with 991 (89.28%) were literate amongst them while 119 (10.72%) were illiterate. Most of the respondents (36.22%) who had knowledge regarding birth registration were in the age group of 26-35 years.

**KEYWORDS:** Knowledge, Registration of Birth.

**INTRODUCTION:** India is a country of diversity so is the knowledge regarding registration of birth. As we all know birth registration is an important document which provides the individual his or her identity and forms the basis of his/her legacy.<sup>(1)</sup>

In India genesis of vital registration system is very old but unlike now it was not compulsory earlier and there was no uniform law for birth and death registration. The first census in the Indian subcontinent was conducted in 1881 in Bengal province of British India. Despite of all these there was no uniform system of births and deaths registration in India till 1969A.D when the Act called "Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969" was passed<sup>(2)</sup>

Overall registration of births in India was 63% and that of deaths was 58% in 2005. In India also there is variation from state to state in the percentage of registration of both birth and death. According to NFHS III (2006) more than 59% children born every year are not registered with any civil authority thus becoming invisible. Only 27% under the age of 5 years have a birth certificate. According to recent data the extent of birth registration varies substantially across states. While Gujarat, Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Goa have over 90% children registered after birth the figure is dismally low in Bihar and Jharkhand standing below 30%. Similarly in case of death registration a huge difference has been noticed from state to state. With again Bihar showing lowest registration and Kerala, Punjab showing highest registration (R.C. Sethi, Additional Registrar General, India, 2005).<sup>(3)</sup>

**OBJECTIVES:**

1. To find out the knowledge regarding registration of birth.
2. To find out possible association between knowledge of birth registration with sex and literacy.

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## **MATERIALS AND METHODS:**

**Study Design:** Cross sectional descriptive Study.

**Study Population:** Rural and urban populations of selected registration units of Kamrup District.

**Study Area:** Kamrup district of Assam.

**Study Period:** One year 2009.

**Study Tool:** Predesigned pretested interview schedule.

This study was done in the rural as well as well urban areas of Kamrup district of Assam during 2009. In Kamrup District there were thirty four registering unit of which twenty one are in rural areas and thirteen were in the urban areas. (Source: Office Jt. DHS). This on calculation came to be sixty percent in Rural Kamrup and forty percent in Urban Kamrup. It was decided to go for twenty percent of the registering units which was calculated to be seven. It was again divided into four and three according to the percentage of distribution (i.e. 60% and 40%) of the registering units in rural and urban areas respectively. Thus four registering units in rural area and three units in urban area were selected accordingly. Two villages/wards were selected at random from each registering units. In each village or ward 100 household were visited and data were recorded in predesigned and pretested interview schedule from those household. No awareness camp or any other methods for generating awareness were applied before the study. It was a onetime study where the interviewer went house to house and interviewed person available there at the time of visit. Person interviewed were more than 16 years of age. Various socio demographic data along with knowledge regarding registration of birth was collected. Before going for the study proper permission has been taken from the Director of Health Service, Assam, Joint Director of Health Services, Kamrup District and ethical committee of Guwahati Medical College and Hospital.

**DATA MANAGEMENT AND STATISTICAL ANALYSIS:** The data was analysed manually.

Chi-square test were used.

P value less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

Socio economic status was classified using Prasad classification.

**RESULTS:** A total of 1400 individuals were interviewed by house to house visit. Respondents from both the sexes were included but for age, criteria for inclusion was 16years and above. Responses from the respondents were noted down in the pre-designed and pre-tested interview schedule during interview. Out of 1400 respondents who were interviewed by house to house visit, 63.5% were female and 36.5% were male. Majority of the respondent belonged to age group 26-35 years (32.29%). Majority of the respondents belonged to social class III. (According to Prasad's Socio-economic classification)<sup>(4)</sup> In the present study majority of the respondents were literate (81.72%).

Study findings showed that 79.29% of respondents had knowledge regarding birth registration and 89.28% were literate amongst them. Most of the respondents (36.22%) who had knowledge regarding birth registration were in the age group of 26-35 years. Their main source of knowledge regarding birth registration was media (42.88%). Most of them said Government

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hospitals (39.91%) as the place of registration. Among the 1110 respondents only 1.89% had knowledge regarding delayed registration of births while 98.11% didn't know about it. An association had been found between the level of education and knowledge on birth registration which was statistically significant. But no association had been noted between knowledge on birth registration and sex of the respondent.

Sex of the Respondents	Knowledge on Birth Registration	
	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Male	393	35.41
Female	717	64.59
<b>Total</b>	<b>1110</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to sex and their knowledge on birth registration

Literacy status of the Respondents	Knowledge on Birth Registration	
	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Literate	991	89.28
Illiterate	119	10.72
<b>Total</b>	<b>1110</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2: Distribution of respondents according to literacy status and knowledge on birth registration

Age of the Respondents	Knowledge on Birth Registration	
	Number of Respondents	Percentage
16-25 years	274	24.69
26-35 years	402	36.22
36-45 years	250	22.52
46-55 years	134	12.07
56-65 years	37	3.33
66 years and above	13	1.17
<b>Total</b>	<b>1110</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 3: Distribution of respondents according to age and knowledge on birth registration

Time of Birth Registration	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Less than 30 days	634	57.12
More than 30 days	26	2.34
Do not know	450	40.54
<b>Total</b>	<b>1110</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4: Distribution of respondents according to knowledge regarding time of birth registration

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Source of Knowledge regarding Birth Registration	Number of Respondents (n=1110)	Percentage
Doctor	184	16.58
ANM	23	2.07
Media	476	42.88
Gaonbura	2	0.18
PRI Member	8	0.72
Others	953	85.86

Table 5: Distribution of respondents according to the source of knowledge of birth registration

Place of Birth Registration	Number of Respondents	Percentage
PHC	259	23.33
Govt. Hospital	443	39.91
Municipality	196	17.66
Do not know	212	19.10
Total	1110	100

Table 6: Distribution of respondents according to the knowledge regarding the place of birth registration

Delayed Registration of Birth	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	21	1.89
No	1089	98.11
Total	1110	100

Table 7: Distribution of respondents according to knowledge regarding delayed registration of birth

**DISCUSSION:** It is seen in present study that 79.29% of respondents have knowledge regarding birth registration whereas 20.71% respondents were lacking in the same. Similarly in a community based cross sectional study conducted in the state of Chhattisgarh (2005) "Study of Birth registration in Chhattisgarh", jointly by UNICEF and State Planning Commission, Chhattisgarh, they found that most of respondents knew about registration but the level of awareness is poor and they didn't know the procedure of registration.<sup>(5)</sup> In this present study out of 1110 respondents, who had knowledge on birth registration, 35.41% were male and rests 64.59% were female. Most of the respondents were from age group 26-35 years (36.22%). Among those 1110 respondents, 89.28% were literate and remaining 10.72% were illiterate. In a similar study conducted by SHRC, Chhattisgarh (2005) they found that 49% of females and

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48.6% of males had knowledge on birth registration. Again in the study of Megha Gupta and et.al (2009) they found that the mean age of respondents were 36.3 years.<sup>(6)</sup> It was also seen that 57.12% of the respondents knew that birth should be registered in less than 30 days where as 40.54% didn't know about the time of registration and only 2.34% responded that it had to be registered beyond 30 days. In a similar study conducted by SHRC, Chhattisgarh (2005), they mentioned that there was limited knowledge among the respondents about the time of registration. Around 85.86% of respondents got the knowledge regarding birth registration from other sources like relatives, neighbours, AWWs, ASHAs etc, 42.88% got their knowledge from the media (print as well as multi media) followed by doctor (16.58%). But in the study by T.M. Akande and O. O. Sekoni (2005) conducted in Nigeria showed that awareness of birth registration was high (97.6%) in the study population and the major source of awareness of registration of births and deaths was mostly from government agencies (63.1%), mass media (19.1%), interaction with other people 6.2%, while 28(11.61%) were not aware at all.<sup>(7)</sup> In the study of Megha Gupta and et.al (2009) they found that most important source of information was from relatives and neighbours (33.7%) followed by health personnel (27.7%) which was similar to the finding in the present study. Most of the respondents (39.91%) thought that Government Hospitals were the place for birth registration followed by PHC (23.33%) and municipality (17.66%). It had been seen that 19.10% of respondent didn't know the place of registration. In a similar study by Megha Gupta and et.al (2009) they found that only 36.1% of the respondents knew the place of registration for births.

In present study it was seen that out of 1110 respondents who had knowledge 1.89% knew about delayed registration of birth and rest 98.11% didn't have any knowledge.

**CONCLUSION:** It is seen in the present study that 1110(79.29%) respondents had knowledge regarding births registration. Of these 1110 respondents 991(89.28%) were literate. Knowledge regarding the delayed registration of births was present in only 21(1.89%) of 1110 respondents. Most of them belonged to age group 26-35 years (36.22%) and the main source of their knowledge was from relatives, neighbors, ASHA, AWW etc., (85.86%).

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

- To increase the awareness among people about the importance and obligatory nature of births and deaths registration by BCC activities.
- To improve access to the registering units by decentralizing births and deaths registration units to village level making PRI members responsible for each and every births and deaths.
- Special drive, at least once a year, to mop up babies whose births have not been registered, may also be considered and same can be applied for deaths within last one year.
- It should be made obligatory to produce birth or death certificate for procuring any documents and no other option should be provided.

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