



RMRCT UPDATE

Vol. 7, No.2, October 2010

BIANNUAL NEWSLETTER OF
REGIONAL MEDICAL RESEARCH CENTRE FOR TRIBALS
JABALPUR

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KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICES OF MATERNAL HEALTH CARE AMONG BAIGAS OF DINDORI, MADHYA PRADESH

Dinesh Kumar

Improving maternal, newborn and child survival is a global and national research priority. Knowledge of Maternal health care services and practices of tribal women are too much important in context of reducing the risk of life of mothers and new born. Globally, millions of women, newborns, and children die from preventable causes in each year. The literature shows that more than 60 million women deliver at home without skilled care.¹ About 530,000 women die from pregnancy related complications, with some 68,000 of those deaths resulting from unsafe abortion.² About 4 million babies die within the first month of life and more than 3 million die as stillbirths³ and over 10 million children under the age of 5 die.⁴ The complications of pregnancy and childbirth cause had more deaths and disability than any other reproductive health problems such as millions of women in developing countries experience life threatening and other serious health

problems related to pregnancy or childbirth.

Our country accounts for more than 20% of the global maternal and child deaths, and also records 20% of births worldwide. Approximately 30 million women in India experience pregnancy annually, and 27 million have live births. Of these, nearly 136,000 maternal deaths occur annually, most of which can be prevented. The maternal mortality ratio is 540 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, rising to 619 in rural areas. States with high maternal mortality include Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar⁵

The SRS (2004-06) of health profiles of M.P state have higher maternal mortality ratio (335) and infant mortality (70) compared to national figure of 254 and 53 respectively⁶. Baigas is a historical

primitive tribe of M.P known as expert axe men and depend on their axes for their livelihood on denizens of forest. The high mortality rate among the Baigas is also a sad tale of woes⁷. The socio - economic indicators of Dindori the district in which the study was conducted, shows higher IMR (70), Maternal Mortality Rate (390), Birth Rate (26), Death Rate (10)⁸.

A study was carried out among Baiga's tribe by the Centre in Dindori district of Madhya Pradesh. A cross sectional survey with a probability proportion to size sampling technique was carried out. Out of the district's total population, 95% lives in rural area and 65.3% population are tribal. The 37% of the population is under BPL, with poor health and education facilities⁸. The information was collected by trained investigators through structured schedule in the year 2009-10. The total populations 2,258 of 460 households were surveyed in 24 villages and 500 ever married women were interviewed to assess their knowledge and practices related to maternal health care.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Study Population

Average household size was 4.9 persons (ranges 1-12) with a sex ratio of 1045 female/1000 male. Overwhelming majority of tribe lived in nuclear families (73.8%). The source of drinking water is important because waterborne diseases including diarrhea and dysentery are quite prevalent in tribal areas. It was found that about 30.4% of households were using drinking water mostly from stream/river.

Knowledge of Maternal Health Care Services

Women's knowledge regarding maternal health care services was assessed out of 500 ever married women and result indicated that about two-third women (67%) were not aware of maternal health care services. The knowledge of maternal health care services

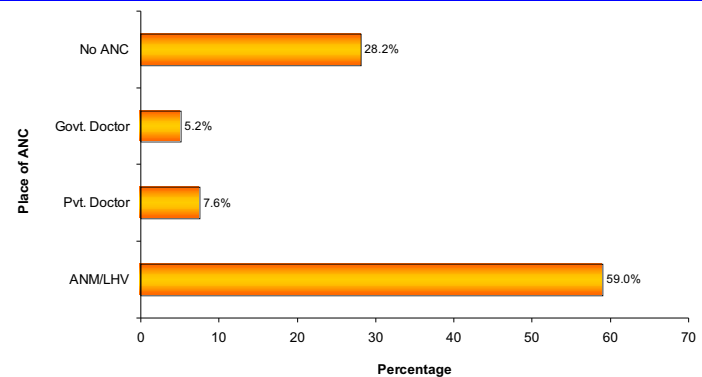


Figure 1: Sources of ANC

birth in last five years compared to those who did not delivered during the same period. Furthermore, only 13% women knew about the danger signs of pregnancy.

Antenatal Care Practices

Out of 500 women, 380 had pregnancies during last five years and 273 (72%) of them had taken at least one ANC mostly from ANM/LHV (Fig 1). For majority, first antenatal checkup was done in the second trimester (43%). Consumption of IFA tablets and T.T. immunization was reported from 68% and 76.3% of the respondents respectively.

Place of Delivery

Most of deliveries which take place at homes are assisted by medically untrained persons, which lead to higher maternal morbidities and mortality⁹. The place of delivery is an important factor to save the mothers life and prevent associated risks. It was found in the study that only a handful of births were attended by skilled health personnel. Ninety two percent deliveries were made at home and only 8% deliveries were conducted at health institutions. Further out of all home deliveries, only 8% deliveries were assisted by skilled person. The postnatal care practices were also poor among the Baigas.

To conclude the findings of the study revealed low awareness and underutilize of maternal health services. Some of the factors responsible for poor utilization of services were their poverty, ignorance, distance to medical facilities and lack of means of transport. Motherhood is often a positive and fulfilling experience for women, but it is also associated with suffering, ill-health and even

death in many cases¹⁰. The rate of deaths among women during or after pregnancy, in India has declined to 212 per 100,000 live births in 2007-09 as against 254 in 2004-06, according to data released by the Registrar General of India. Though there is a decline of 17% during the period, much more has to be done in this direction. The country needs to achieve a target of 109 deaths by 2015 to achieve the United Nations-mandated Millennium Development Goals a feat already achieved by Kerala, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu¹¹.

The concept of healthy mother and healthy baby is an important aspect of reproductive health care programme and this can be achieved to a great extent by reducing health inequalities. This may be achieved by improving education, availability, accessibility and quality of health services in tribal areas.

Acknowledgement:

Author acknowledge Mr. Ajay Goel, TA (R) and Mr. M.L. Kori, TA (R) for their various help extended in this study.

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Dr. Dinesh Kumar, Scientist 'C' (Statistics)

Publications

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Workshops/Symposium/Training/Meeting attended

Dr. Neeru Singh

- Attended meeting with Principal Secretary, Govt. of Chhattisgarh, Secretaries of Tribal and other departments and State Health Officers regarding Malaria in Tribals of Chhattisgarh on 22nd & 23rd April 2010.
- Attended and delivered a lecture in a workshop on 'Strengthening of MP Climate Change Cell' sponsored by GoMP and UNDP at RCVP Narohna Academy of Administration, Bhopal on 26th and 27th April 2010.
- Delivered lecture on 'Malaria' in a training programme organized by SOCHARA (Society for Community Health, Awareness, Research and Action) Bhopal at Sneha Sadan Jabalpur on 28th June 2010.
- Attended informal consultative meeting on standard protocol development for estimating malaria disease burden in SEA region, WHO SEARO, New Delhi during 11th-13th August, 2010.
- Attended a meeting on consultation on strategy for malaria vaccine development at Delhi during 28th - 30th September 2010.

Dr. T. Chakma

- Attended a workshop on selected stakeholders on water quality monitoring organized by NEERI on 7th September 2010 held at Nagpur.

Dr. Jyothi Bhat

- Attended DOTS Plus training programme during 31st May - 4th June 2010 at STDC, Ahmedabad.
- Attended a training programme on 'Process of Quality' organized by MPSACS, Bhopal during 17th - 20th August 2010.

Dr. R. K. Sharma

- Attended and presented a paper at 2010 annual meeting of Population Association of America (PAA), during 15th -17th April 2010 at Dallas, USA.

Dr. Pradip Barde

- Attended and delivered a lecture at EPCO organized meeting on climate change held at Bhopal on 7th July 2010.

Dr. P. K. Bharti

- Attended a meeting in department of Biotechnology AIIMS New Delhi during 11th - 13th May 2010 to discuss the vaccine study.
- Attend a training programme on In-vitro culture of *Plasmodium falciparum* at ICGB, New Delhi during 29th August - 4th September 2010.

Foreign Visits

Dr. R. K Sharma, Scientist 'C' visited Dallas, Texas, USA to attend the 2010 Annual meeting of the Population Association of America (PAA) during 15th - 17th April 2010. Dr. Sharma also visited East-West Centre (EWC), University of Hawaii, Hawaii, USA during 18th - 20th April 2010. He received a Travel award from William and Flora Hewlett Foundation for his visit.

Workshops/Symposium/Training/Meeting conducted

Dr. V.M. Katoch, Secretary, Department of Health Research, Govt. of India & Director General, ICMR, Delhi visited the centre on 2nd April, 2010 and reviewed the Centre's research activities.



An orientation meeting of District Programme Officers on Quality Assurance of Malaria Laboratory Diagnosis and Pharmacovigilance of Antimalarials was organized on 10th April, 2010 at RMRCT Jabalpur.



A training workshop was conducted on 21st May, 2010 for the staff of the centre with the objective to train them in biosafety level 2 laboratory practices.



A training workshop on vector borne diseases for Medical Officers of various districts of Madhya Pradesh was organized during 28th - 30th July 2010 jointly with NIMR FS Jabalpur and Directorate of Health Services.



Collector Jabalpur district organized a meeting at RMRCT on 18th August, 2010 to review the situation of Swine Flu in Jabalpur. Chief Medical and Health Officer, and other health officers also attended the meeting.



The centre also organized journal club meeting from time to time. The scientists and students of the centre discuss their work.



Joining/Promotion

- Mr. Sharad Koshta joined as Lower Division Clerk on 24.06.2010.
- Mr. Surendra Jatavath joined as Technical Assistant on 26.08.2010.
- Mr. P. K. Choubey was promoted to Lower Division Clerk on 21.06.2010.

Events

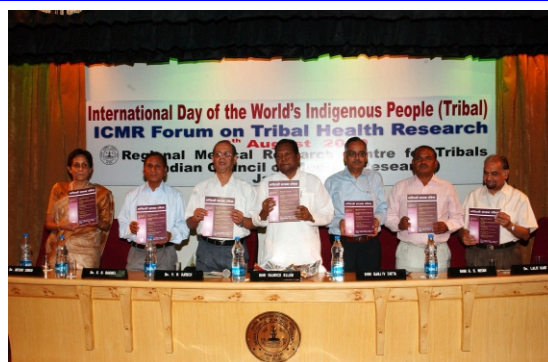
Dr. V.M. Katoch, Secretary to Government of India, Department of Health Research and Director General, Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR), Delhi inaugurated the new trainee hostel on 2nd April 2010.



First Meeting of ICMR Forum on Tribal Health Research was held at the Centre on 8th August, 2010. Directors and scientists of various other ICMR institutes working on tribal health presented the work carried out at their respective institutes. Secretary to Government of India, Department of Health Research (DHR) and Director General, ICMR reviewed the research work carried out by ICMR institutes/centres on tribal communities.



The International Day of the world's Indigenous Peoples (Tribals) was also observed with great enthusiasm on 9th August, 2010. Shri Maurice Kujur, Vice Chairperson, National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NST) presided over the occasion.



The centre celebrated 64th Independence Day on 15th August, 2010 with great enthusiasm. Dr. Neeru Singh, Director of the centre hoisted the National Flag at the main building of the centre.



On the occasion Hindi Fortnight an appeal was made by the Director to all officers and staff of the Centre to carry out their official work as much as possible in Hindi. Various competitions were organized at the centre to promote working in Hindi among the employees. The winners of the competitions were presented with cash prizes and certificates by Director of the centre.



Constructions work of Guest house under progress





Painting on Dancing Session of Baigas- a primitive tribe of M.P.
-By Dr. R. C. Mishra, Technical Officer-A