

**COST AND IMPACT OF INACURATE STATISTICS OF UNREGISTERED
CHILDREN POPULATION ON SOME SOCIOECONOMIC INDICATORS: CASE
STUDY OF EBONYI STATE**

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the costs and impact of inaccurate statistics of unregistered children population in Ebonyi State. Birth registration is a long term documentation of the existence of a child, being the right of the child for local, national, international identification. This process has direct and indirect cost implication. Inaccurate statistics of unregistered birth has been notice within the Nigerian economy to cause inequalities in sectors as education, health planning as well as fiscal outfit of the country; so also in Ebonyi State. Ebonyi State being a more rural populated area has recorded the highest in fertility rate, but the statistics for birth registration remains unsatisfying; having the challenge of identifying the unregistered children correctly. The Traditional Birth Attendants have just interest on delivery. The budgetary provision for economic activities in the state is grossly inadequate, how then can proper and equity allocation be made while we have many unidentified populace? The objectives of the study are (i) to investigate the significant impact of registered birth on some socioeconomic indicators in Ebonyi State, (ii) to empirically evaluate the effect of unregistered birth on children, (iii) to statistically compare the significant effect of birth registration on some socioeconomic variables among selected Nigerian States. The variables in use were proxied to some indicators of socioeconomic status. Method employed for this study will be descriptive/empirical analysis and theory of inclusive growth to evaluate the objectives listed. The findings from the research, drawn from the analysis are discussed, conclusion made and recommendations outlined.

Keywords: *Unregistered birth, Registered Birth, Ebonyi State, Socioeconomic indicators,*

Background

Birth registration is a long term documentation of the existence of a child, being the right of the child for local, national, international identification. It is a permanent and official record of a child's existence. Birth registration is the process by which a child's birth is recorded in the civil register by the government authority. It provides the first legal recognition of the child and is generally required for the child to obtain a birth certificate and as a result any other legal documents and rights. The child who is not registered at birth is in danger of being denied the right to an official identity. Most times, children are registered without birth certificates which bring to bear the inaccuracy in birth registration statistics. According to Rao Gupta (2013), birth registration is more than just a right, it is how societies first recognize and acknowledge a child's identity and existence. It is also a key to guaranteeing that children are not forgotten, denied their rights, or hidden from the progress of their nations. By her speech on tribune report, the new report, titled 'Every Child's Birth Right: Inequities and trends in birth registration', collected statistical analysis spanning over 61 countries and presented the latest estimates on birth registration.

By information, a child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents (CRC, 1989). To buttress this, the 1948 UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights and subsequent establishment of the World Bank aptly recognized human rights and development as intertwined concepts that are not mutually exclusive. Of the cardinal issues raised in the human rights framework is the right of identity. Article 24(2) of the UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) ingenuously states "every child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have a name". Article 6(1) further opines: "every human being has the inherent right to life. This right shall be protected by law and no one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his life". The Convention on Rights of the Child (CRC), one human right instrument that has received more ratifications than any other rights treaty also recognizes the rights of every child to birth registration. Unfortunately, about 51 million children are unregistered on yearly basis and the majority of those unregistered are in developing countries in Africa, Asia and Southern America (Joshua and Samuel, 2015), which Ebonyi State is part of.

Birth registration and a birth certificate is vital for unlocking a child's full potential," said Rao Gupta. "All children are born with enormous potential. But if societies fail to count them, and do not even recognize that they are there, they are more vulnerable to neglect and abuse. Inevitably, their potential will be severely diminished." Unregistered births are a symptom of the inequities and disparities in a society. The most affected by these inequities include children from certain ethnic or religious groups, children living in rural or remote areas, children from poor households or children of uneducated mothers. "Societies will never be equitable and inclusive until all children are counted," said Gupta, adding "birth registration has lasting consequences, not only for the child's well-being, but also for the development of their communities and countries."

Globally as reported in 2012, only around 60% of all babies born were registered at birth. The rates varied significantly across regions, with the lowest levels of birth registration found in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. The 10 countries with the lowest birth registration levels are: Somalia (3%), Liberia (4%), Ethiopia (7%), Zambia (14%), Chad (16%), United Republic of Tanzania (16%), Yemen (17%), Guinea-Bissau (24%), Pakistan (27%) and Democratic Republic of Congo (28%). Even when children are registered, many have no proof of that. In Eastern and Southern Africa, for example, only about half of the registered children have birth certificates.

UNICEF is very keen about the situation of children who, in legal terms, do not exist, having no document to prove how old they are or even who they are. Such good number of people are easily faced with discrimination and lack of access to basic services such as health and education. Unregistered children are generally the children of the poor and the excluded. An unregistered child will be a more attractive target for a child trafficker and does not have even the minimal protection that a birth certificate provides against early marriage, child labour, or detention and persecution as an adult. In later life, the unregistered child may be unable to apply for a passport or formal job, open a bank account, and get a driving license or a marriage certificate.

Children unregistered at birth or without identification documents are often excluded from accessing education, health care and social security. If children are separated from their families during natural disasters, conflicts or as a result of exploitation, reuniting them is made more difficult by the lack of official documentation.

According to Corbacho, Brito and Rivas (2012), Children without birth certificates are at risk of lifelong exclusion from fundamental benefits and rights, including access to education, health services, conditional cash transfers, and pensions. Moreover, they may be denied civil rights such as adoption and inheritance and be exposed to great jeopardy from exploitation and human trafficking.

The registration of births and deaths in Nigeria, as with most developing countries continues to remain suboptimal with many births and deaths going unregistered. This has negative consequences for economic planning and development (Ekaete et al, 2013). The civil registration records of births and deaths are necessary for countries to compile accurate, complete and timely vital statistics, which, along with population censuses, are central to estimating population size especially for small areas. Without knowing the size and composition of the local population, how can local authorities decide how much and what type of essential services to provide?

A functional vital registration system in any country, by supplying the most reliable data on deaths and births and population dynamics, provides indicators for health and development; and pre-requisite data for the effective planning of health and other services, resource allocation, legal, administrative and health policy formulation, program planning, and evaluation. Birth registration data are needed to formulate programs relating to maternal and child health including nutrition, immunization and universal education. Nigeria, a signatory to the convention, established the compulsory registration of births and deaths since 1979, with the National Population Commission (NPC) established and charged with the statutory responsibility of production of vital and demographic data in 1992. However, several decades after, only a small proportion of these events are actually registered, with the national average for birth registration put at 30%, with 49% in urban areas and 22% rural areas in the 2008 census. Thus, about 70% of the over 5 million births annually go unregistered. Interestingly, there is no national average for death registration.

Based on the framework of Millennium Development Goals, availability of quality of data to monitor progress is cardinal. The goals, which directly affect children are universal primary education and improved child mortality. However, without reliable data on children, it will be difficult for countries to monitor, plan and intervene to achieve the goals. Data on births and deaths is one of the best demographic tools for gathering information for population health

monitoring. These concerns about data quality could be dealt with in the presence of complete or high coverage of events, especially births and deaths.

However, the speech of the Country Director of Health Policy Plus (HP+), Mr. Onoriode Ezire in 2017, revealed that Ebonyi State has the highest rate of child birth in the entire South-east geopolitical zone. He maintained that the growing population would increase challenges in acquiring quality education, accessing health care, just as it would increase unemployment level. The high population growth rate in Ebonyi, is as a result of the young age structure combined with high level of fertility. This increased birth rate does not have a close or equal rate of identification of these births with regards to registration and certificates.

Unfortunately, the accuracy of birth and death records, particularly in developing countries, has come under question in several studies with the increasing realization that each year, despite a growing awareness of the importance of vital registration, and the commitment of states under international law to ensure this right, several births go uncounted. There by, living huge gaps in the availability and quality of these crucial data in many parts of the world, Ebonyi State in particular. And this presents a major challenge to evidence-based public policy. Could it be said that there is inadequate manpower to capture birth rate? Is it a question of unskilled labour or lack of relevant technology to enable accurate and availability of data.

In a bid to collect data for analysis, we discovered the following;

- a. Births are sparingly registered in our health facilities; especially at primary facility level and TBA deliveries, where majority of these children are delivered in Ebonyi State. Since births are not captured, how do we then know the number of unregistered birth, even to talk of the accuracy of the data?
- b. Unharmonized data (this means data coming from different sources with different statistics).
- c. Inadequate qualified or trained data officers at primary facility level.
- d. Unwillingness of parents to register their children due to ignorance
- e. Inadequate birth registration materials at health facilities
- f. No standardized database for all socioeconomic indicators for the State

To the above issues, the study investigates the costs and impact of inaccurate statistics of unregistered children population on some socioeconomic indicators in Ebonyi State. The

indicators of interest are; Birth registration rate, unemployment, rate of primary school attendance, immunization, percentage of registered pregnant women in the clinic, birth rate and population rate in the State. Some States that have close characteristics of Ebonyi State are comparably used in this investigation. The States are Abia, Adamawa, Gombe, Zamfara

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are;

- (i) to investigate the significant impact of registered birth on some socioeconomic indicators in Ebonyi State,
- (ii) to empirically evaluate the effect of unregistered birth on children,
- (iii) to statistically compare the significant effect of birth registration on some socioeconomic variables among selected Nigerian States.

Research Questions

1. Is there any significant impact of registered birth on some socioeconomic indicators in Ebonyi State?
2. Could the effect of unregistered birth on children be empirically evaluated?
3. Is there significant effect of birth registration on socioeconomic variables among selected states in Nigeria?

Significance of the Study

The study will be beneficial to the government as a policy tool, the parent through increased knowledge on the importance of birth registration. It will also be of good help to the data processing officers and institution, having the idea of the harm that unrecorded, inaccurate data causes to the State and the country at large. To the individual, this study will arouse their mind on the need to be captured, as it is said that “if it is not written, it does not exist”. Finally, the research will complement the existing literatures for reference purposes.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Campaign Concept for Birth Registration

The campaign for birth registration is not a new one for Plan. The organization has been working on the issue since 1998, when it was invited by the NGO (non-governmental organization) group on UNICEF to support the Unregistered Children Project in Asia. Plan's work on birth registration has since extended to Africa and the Americas, with work in close collaboration with local communities, national governments and other partners. Plan's global campaign for birth registration takes this existing local, national and regional work worldwide. Based on Plan's campaign report 'Universal birth registration a universal responsibility', the global campaign for action complements upward pressure for achieving universal birth registration with downward pressure through donor governments and regional and international institutions, such as the African Union, the European Union (EU) and the UN.

Barriers to achieving increased birth registration

International level Barriers

- Lack of recognition, support and priority for achieving universal birth registration by the international Community
- Absence of clear global leadership for achieving universal birth registration, and lack of coordination among the stakeholders working on the issue

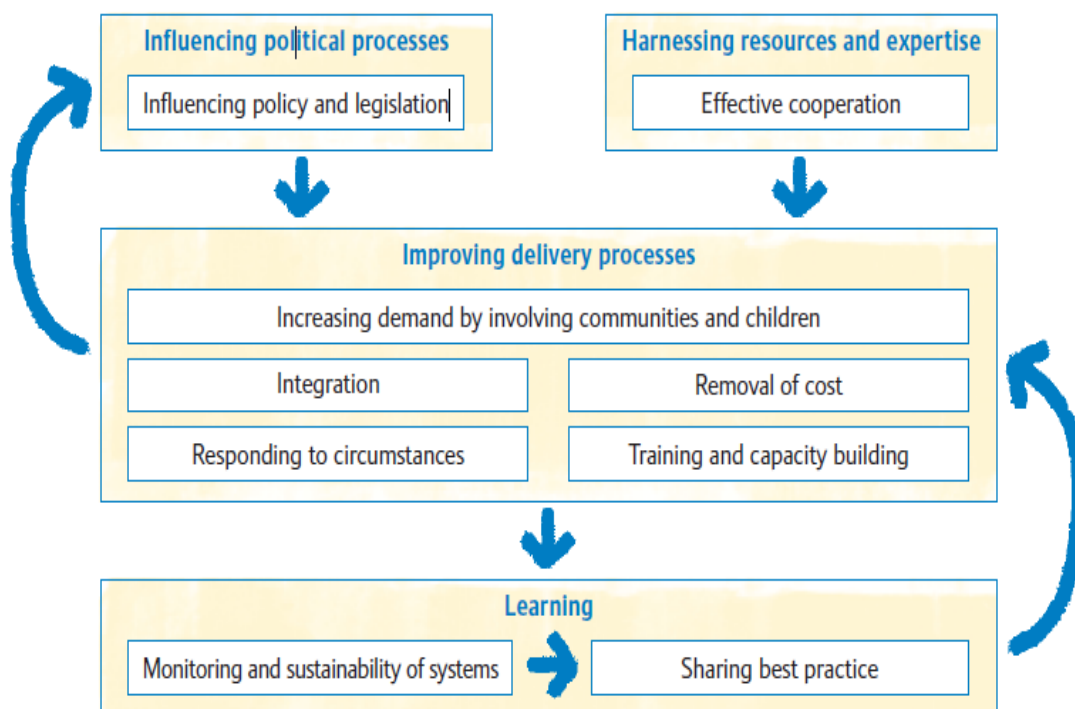
National level Barriers

- Lack of political will for achieving universal birth registration and coordination between relevant government ministries
- Lack of financial and human resources for operating effective birth registration systems including: number of trained registrars; administrative capacity; and technology for data management
- Legislative barriers including: absence of legal framework and systems for birth registration; lack of enforcement of current legislation; discriminatory legislation based on sex, race, origin and religion; and unsupportive policies
- Geographical barriers
- Problematic country context due to social unrest, war and conflict, or disaster

Local level Barriers

- Lack of awareness about birth registration
- Few incentives to register children
- Incompatibility of birth registration systems with local realities, such as: highly centralized systems; bureaucratic registration procedures; and little regard of local culture and societal norms
- Lack of resources for: the cost of registration; fees associated with late registration; and travel costs associated with travelling to civil registries
- Fear of discrimination and persecution as a result of registration
- Corruption of civil registrars and inaccurate civil records

Strategies to increase birth registration



Inclusive Growth Concept

Inclusive growth is a concept that advances equitable opportunities for economic participants during economic growth with benefits incurred by every section of society, Raniera et al (2013). This concept expands upon traditional economic growth models to include focus on

the equity of health, human capital, environmental quality, social protection, and food security. It has a direct links between the macroeconomic and microeconomic determinants of the economy and economic growth. The microeconomic dimension captures the importance of structural transformation for economic diversification and competition, while the macro dimension refers to issues of population, inequality, changes in economic aggregates such as the country's gross national product (GNP) or gross domestic product (GDP), total factor productivity, and aggregate factor inputs.

Sustainable economic growth requires inclusive growth. Maintaining this is sometimes difficult because economic growth may give rise to negative externalities, such as a rise in corruption, which is a major problem in developing countries. Nonetheless, an emphasis on inclusiveness especially on equality of opportunity in terms of access to markets, resources, and an unbiased regulatory environment is an essential ingredient of successful growth. The inclusive growth approach takes a longer-term perspective, as the focus is on productive employment as a means of increasing the incomes of poor and excluded groups and raising their standards of living.

Although the concept of inclusive economic growth is relatively nascent, it is now, more than ever, deemed very relevant to Africa. Contrary to the traditional concept of pro-poor growth, which more or less places those at the lower end of the income/wealth distribution spectrum at the margin of the processes of wealth creation, the concept of inclusive growth suggests a more active participation of the poor in all economic affairs including being counted for planning through birth registration. An appealing sub concept proposes two pillars labour absorbing growth and increasing productivity of those who are being employed. Although perhaps the full conceptualization and modelling framework is still to see light, some work has been done to attempt to understand how inclusive the recent surge of growth in Africa might have been. This paper explores the literature of inclusive growth in the African context, from a socio-economic stand point. It attempts to establish the characterizations of inclusive growth in Africa, its underlying arguments and prospects for future theoretical and empirical development.

Review of Related Empirical Literature

On the course of this study, we found out that there are no direct literatures speaking to the inaccuracy of statistics for unregistered children. However, many authors wrote on birth

registration, its importance and cogency of birth data in an economy. below are some the later literature as reviewed.

Ana, Steve & René (2012) explained that the drivers of educational attainment have been the subject of much research both in the developed and the developing world. Yet, nothing is known about the effect of birth registration on schooling outcomes. They stated that birth registration is not only a fundamental human right but also a requirement to obtain additional documents of legal identity and access many government benefits. Using data for the Dominican Republic, this paper is the first to shed light on the causal impact of the lack of birth registration on education. The result of their findings revealed that children without documents of birth registration do not face lower chances of entering the schooling system. Yet, the absence of birth registration becomes a critical obstacle to graduate from primary school and translates into fewer years of overall educational attainment.

Michael James Miller (2007) established that birth registration is the legal recognition a child's existence. It can be generally defined as the official recording of the birth of a child by some administrative level of the State and coordinated by a particular branch of government. The briefing paper suggests 10 recommendations which are devised from the experience of a range of actors involved in birth registration. The recommendations intend to contribute to the creation of a "protective environment" for children.

Abdul-Aziz et al (2015) informed that birth and death registration is one of the most widely used national and local data for identifying and addressing major public health concerns; therefore, evaluated the effect of birth and death registration on health service delivery. The study was conducted in the Tolon District where the District Births and Deaths Registry, the Planning Unit of the District Assembly and the District Health Directorate were selected for the study from March to July 2014. The study employed the survey research design where questionnaire administration was used for data collection. Stratified random sampling was used to identify the various sample points. It was found out that 86.9% of responses showed that education, distance, future employment, school enrollment, voting, obtaining a passport, cause of death, insurance benefits, settlement of pension claims and the calculation of death rate influence birth and death registration. Also, 80.0% of the responses showed that birth registration contributes to vaccination, family planning interventions and that death registration contributes to measuring and monitoring child and maternal mortality rates, calculation of death rate and determination of cause of death. Beside, 84.3% of the responses confirmed that cost, children born to nomads, lack of support from the District Assembly and

distance are challenges to birth and death registration. Finally, 86.0% of the responses point to the fact that tying registration to health care, public awareness campaign, the use of mobile phones for registration and building partnerships with other organizations are strategies for birth and death registration. The study recommended that the District Births and Deaths Registry, the District Education Directorate, the District Health Directorate and the District Assembly collaborate to improve birth and death registration for enhanced health service delivery.

Methodology

This analysis is based on univariate which examines patterns of self-reported reasons for non-registration and bivariate that talks about relationship between proportion children registered by socioeconomic covariates. Basic descriptive statistics was employed to compare the relationship of the birth registration among States of Nigeria using a time frame of 12 years. The variables used are; birth rate, unemployment rate, net primary school attendance, percentage of registered pregnant women and infant immunization. The data used was extracted from online websites, Nigeria Data Portal.

Discussion of Results

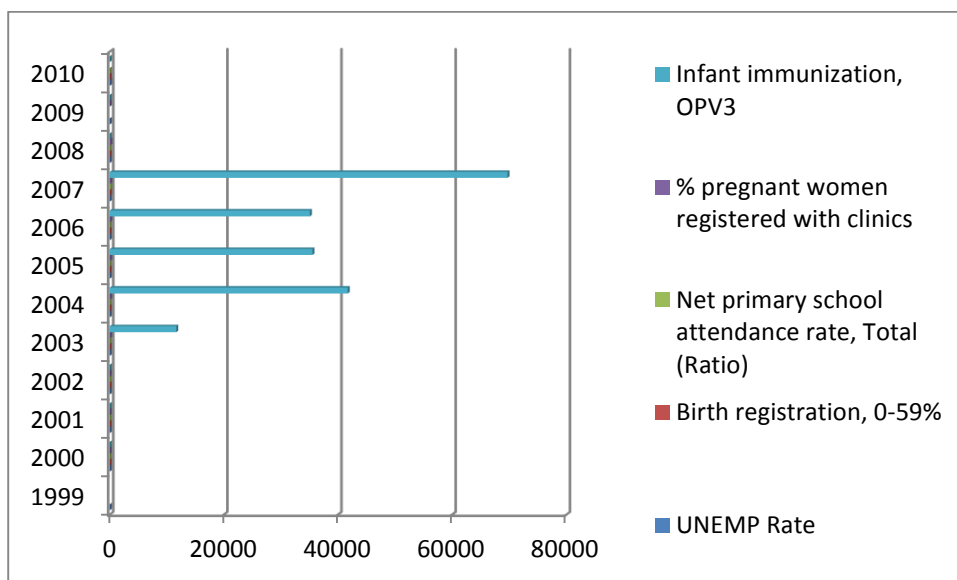
In a bid to ascertain the significant effect of registered birth on some socioeconomic indicators in Ebonyi, we analyzed and present the findings as below;

Table 1: **Ebonyi State Socioeconomic Statistics**

Ebonyi State Socioeconomics Statistics					
	UNEMP Rate	Birth registration, 0-59%	Net primary school attendance rate, Total (Ratio)	% pregnant women registered with clinics	Infant immunization, OPV3
1999	3.4				
2000	3.9				
2001	13.1				
2002	2.8				
2003	16.7			73.8	11667
2004	11.9			65.3	41710

2005	7			67.5	35530
2006	10.9			64.6	35084
2007	7.9	18.7	90.9	85	69688
2008	5.1			100	
2009	12				
2010	25.1				

Figure 1: Graphical Representation of Socioeconomic Statistics of some indicator in Ebonyi State



From the table and figure above, it can be seen that between 1999 and 2010, there has been insufficient data to show the level of birth registration and other health indicators in Ebonyi State. Infant immunization (OPV3) indicated arithmetic progression with inconsistency

within the period of study. This could be as a result of negligence to collection of data for these important and beneficial socioeconomic indicators. Also, poor data management could have inhibited the information being available at the possible site for research and analysis.

Figure 2: Descriptive Analysis of Individual Sample for Socioeconomic Variables

	BR	ANCR	IMU	NPSA	UNEMP
Mean	18.70000	76.03333	38735.80	90.90000	9.983333
Median	18.70000	70.65000	35530.00	90.90000	9.400000
Maximum	18.70000	100.0000	69688.00	90.90000	25.10000
Minimum	18.70000	64.60000	11667.00	90.90000	2.800000
Std. Dev.	NA	13.98952	20755.83	NA	6.473419
Skewness	NA	0.890153	0.305220	NA	0.969749
Kurtosis	NA	2.331557	2.450058	NA	3.442529
Jarque-Bera	NA	0.904077	0.140640	NA	1.978744
Probability	NA	0.636330	0.932095	NA	0.371810
Sum	18.70000	456.2000	193679.0	90.90000	119.8000
Sum Sq. Dev.	0.000000	978.5333	1.72E+09	0.000000	460.9567
Observations	1	6	5	1	12

Source: E View data tool, Computation 2018

Figure 2 explains the significant effect and relationship between birth registration and other socioeconomic indicator used in the study for Ebonyi State. To determine this effect, the probability outcome of the individual sample was used with 5% critical value. The finding showed insignificant effect of birth registration on registered pregnant women (ANCR), Immunization, Net primary school attendant and unemployment as they all exhibited figures above 0.05 (5%) significant level. The result also showed unequal observation within the same time frame, reporting that statistics on the above variables has been paid less attention to.

Effect of unregistered birth on Children

First, we explained some of the benefits of birth registration as;

- An access to the world of Health care.
- It implies education for a kid
- It can provide protection
- It can help provide inheritance.

- It creates a permanent record of existence

Reasons for Unregistered Child

1. Religious belief of the Head of household
2. Illiteracy of parents
3. Unskilled birth (TBAs)
4. Lack of a birth certificate (Printed and formatted copies)
5. Lack of awareness and information.
6. Ignorance and nonchalant attitude of some parents on the registration process

To this effect, we empirically determine the detrimental factors of unregistered birth on children. The findings indicated that Without birth registration, children are shut out of society altogether; The births of almost half the world's children are not registered, leaving them outside support and protection systems and uncounted in policy decisions (UNICEF report, 2012). From this report, when a person does not have an officially established existence, there can be no birth certificate, no proof of age, no proof of biological parentage, no identification and no passport. Children with no birth certificate don't exist before the law, and are in danger of remaining on the margins of society, or being shut out altogether. They are more likely to face major challenges in accessing healthcare, education and social assistance. They are the first to fall through the cracks in protection systems; their 'invisibility' makes it more likely that discrimination, neglect and abuse they might experience will be unnoticed, and unchallenged. Without an age established by birth certificate, there is no protection against child labour, against being treated as an adult in the justice system, against forcible conscription in armed forces, against child marriage and trafficking. Having a birth certificate supports the traceability of unaccompanied and separated children and promotes safe migration – and can be a vital factor in preventing statelessness, itself an obstacle to claiming rights as a citizen. Birth registration is also an essential part of a country's civil registry, providing governments with vital statistics to support accurate planning and monitoring of a country's education, health, social welfare and economic policies.

Alison et al (2016) established that no official identity is correlated with data. This means that leakages or inaccurate statistics of unregistered birth will inform wrong decision and planning for the citizens. So, if concerned institutions and stakeholders comply with birth registration and harmonization of such data, its impact will be felt in Ebonyi State and across board.

The findings indicated unavailable statistics of unregistered birth which has the tendency of increasing the rate of out of school children in Ebonyi State, as can be seen in Table 1 above. This implies that the budgetary provision for economic activities in the state which is grossly inadequate, will suffer from equity allocation of the resources as many unidentified populace will emerge. The unavailability of this could be as a result of non registration of birth and poor data management system.

Table 2: Comparative Analysis of Birth registration and socioeconomic indicators among States

Time	Abia						Adamawa						Ebonyi						Gombe						Zamfara											
	Unem Rates	Birth reg., 0-59 %	%Net pri.sch Attend	%of preg. Wom. regis. with clinics	Infant immu., OPV3	% Distri. of Vacci. U5	Unem Rates	Birth reg., 0-59 %	%Net pri.sch Attend	%of preg. Wom. regis. with clinics	Infant immu., OPV3	% Distri. of Vacci. U5	Unem Rates	Birth reg., 0-59 %	%Net pri.sch Attend	%of preg. Wom. regis. with clinics	Infant immu., OPV3	% Distri. of Vacci. U5	Unem Rates	Birth reg., 0-59 %	%Net pri.sch Attend	%of preg. Wom. regis. with clinics	Infant immu., OPV3	% Distri. of Vacci. U5	Unem Rates	Birth reg., 0-59 %	%Net pri.sch Attend	%of preg. Wom. regis. with clinics	Infant immu., OPV3	% Distri. of Vacci. U5						
Units																																				
1999	9.7						11.2						3.4						5.8						24											
2000	4.2						46.8						3.9						48.2						40.6											
2001	16						18.2						13.1						8.9						22.4											
2002	14.8						12.9						2.8						13.4						46.4											
2003	11.4			61.7	12009		11.9			44.2	6207		16.7			73.8	11667		7.6			53	6084		71.5			14.4	14852							
2004	9.7			65.1	26268		16.7			28.1	35280		11.9			65.3	41710		15.2			21.4	7976		61.3			21.3	18763							
2005	7.9			68.2	24039		21.4			41.7	35593		7			67.5	35530		22.8			19	26976		51.1			21	28136							
2006	13.5			95	54785		17.9			68.4	56881		10.9			64.6	35084		15.6			53.8	41215		50.8			16.7	47277							
2007	25.1	12	98.7	94.1	61310		21.5	0	12.6	65.5	81681		7.9	19	90.9	85	69688		16.9	33	28.2	19	55497		19.1	20	25.4	17.6	49946							
2008	11.9			100			13.5			100			5.1			100			7.6			100			16.4			68.8								
2009	14.5					1.3	29.4					20.2	12				2.4	32.1					29.7	13.3					35.6							
2010	22.8						24.6						25.1						27.2						14.5											

Source: Nigeria Data Portal – Socioeconomic Statistics

Table 2 was used to analyze the comparative effect of birth registration and some socioeconomic variables among Five (5) States of Nigeria (Abia, Adamawa, Ebonyi, Gombe and Zamfara). The available statistics revealed that there is grossly inadequate data on birth registration across the five States within the period under study.

Comparing birth registration and primary education, it is found from the data in the table that unrecorded birth has a correlation with net primary school attendance. As can be seen, data exist in both birth registration and primary education only in 2007 across the States. The finding showed that Ebonyi State has insignificant statistics of birth registration and significant data on primary school attendance in 2007, with a closer observation from Abia State statistics among others States. This means that there was increase in primary school attendance which could not have been as a result of birth registration, but through other interventions.

Considering birth registration and percentage registered pregnant women, the data indicated that there is huge disparity between the two indicators. This means that women register for ANC, give birth but do not register their births, as can be seen across the States.

In nutshell, it was found from the available data that statistics on some of these socioeconomic indicators are not insufficient and unavailable in the domain of data capturing in Ebonyi State. The study indicated several reasons why families do not register children to include prohibitive fees, unawareness of the relevant laws or processes, cultural barriers, and the fear of further discrimination or marginalization.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made;

1. A suitable and practicable system should be in place for registering all birth.
2. Traditional rulers in the state should take the message of importance of birth registration down to people in their respective domains.
3. Data processing Institutions to see the importance of data, its validity and make them available.
4. Traditional birth attendants (TBAs) should be trained on need for birth registration
5. Government should ensure that the available data is published to enhance effective decision making and planning.

6. To speed up progress with civil registration a new way of registering birth is required, taking into consideration technologies that facilitate the collection and visualization of birth registration data.

Conclusion

Birth registration of utmost importance shows that children belong to a family, a community and a nation, and guarantees their right to assume their place in the social and political life of the country, as adults. Unregistered births are common among Africans children, Ebonyi inclusive; particularly in underprivileged families. Birth registration and subsequent issuance of certificate does not only promote human rights to citizenship but also facilitates human rights to good health, education, social security and overall human development. Therefore, timely registration of children should be pursued as a right issue. However, findings from this study indicated that children, whose parents are not wealthy, educated and in rural areas are most deprived to birth registration. Though, globally, it is suggested that it is more of a privilege for a little over half of children whose parents are educated, wealthy and live in urban areas. Yet, without a comprehensive birth, measures aimed at monitoring progress of achieving the MDGs will continue to rely on surveys, which may not be as comprehensive as continuous birth registration system. Policies and programmes meant to increase uptake have to be broad-based, targeting the less privileged (those in rural areas, uneducated mothers, poor households. This may help give proper meaning to country's signatory to international protocols on birth registration as human rights.

The study states that if it is not written, it does not exist and conclude that inaccurate birth registration statistics and compliance has insignificant and negative cost effect on other socioeconomic indicators and Ebonyi State population at large.

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