

LETTER TO EDITOR

Achievement of Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR) below the National Level in Jharkhand

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An indicator of the reproductive health of women in an area is the maternal mortality rate. A lot of women in the reproductive age range pass away from difficulties during, during, or related to pregnancy, childbirth, or abortion. No matter the length or location of the pregnancy, the World Health Organization defines maternal death as "the death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management but not from accidental or incidental causes".(1)

The Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR), which is defined as the number of maternal deaths during a certain time period per 100,000 live births during the same time period, is one of the most important measures of maternal mortality.(2) The global maternal death rate is to be decreased to less than 70 per 100,000 live births, according to Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) objective 3.1 established by the United Nations.(3) In low resource and developing countries, maternal mortality has been attributed to the "three delays": delay in deciding to seek care, delay in reaching care in time, and delay in receiving adequate treatment.(4,5)

It is evident from the figure 01 that in the last five years, there is a declining trend of the maternal mortality ratio (MMR) both at national level & the state of Jharkhand as per the data available from SRS bulletin of MMR. The current declining trend of MMR may be because of improvement in some indicators like increase in the percentage of institutional delivery, reduction of incidence of child marriage, increased total unmet need for family planning, reduction in prevalence of anaemia among pregnant women, increased number of Ante-natal care being received by pregnant women and Antenatal Care (ANC) being performed by skilled Auxiliary Nurse Midwife or Medical Officer (MO), increased coverage of Td immunization among pregnant women.(6)

According to National Family Health Survey (NFHS) – 5 it is evident that Jharkhand has achieved increase in coverage of mothers having atleast four antenatal care (ANC) visits (38.6%) as compared to NFHS – 4 in which it was 30.3%. Mothers receiving ANC in the first trimester has also increased from 52% in NFHS – 4 to 68% in NFHS – 5. Percentage of mothers who received postnatal care from a doctor/ nurse/ Lady Health Visitor (LHV)/ Auxiliary

Nurse Midwife/ midwife/ other health personnel within 2 days of delivery has also increased from previous NFHS (44.4% to 69.1%). As far as percentage of institutional deliveries are concerned, it has increased from 61.9% (NFHS – 4) to 75.8% in NFHS – 5. Percentage of birth attended by skilled health personnel has increased from 69.6% (NFHS – 4) to 82.5% (NFHS – 5). Anaemia is a very important public health issue as far as

pregnancy and it's outcome is concerned. Current data from NFHS – 5 shows that in Jharkhand, percentage of pregnant women aged 15-49 years who are anaemic (Hb level < 11.0 g/dl) has decreased from 62.6% (NFHS – 4) to 56.8% in NFHS – 5.(7) It is depicted in the figure no. 02 that the MMR of Jharkhand is much below many of the states of the country as published in the SRS bulletin of MMR 2018-20.(8)

Figure 1 Line diagram showing the trend of MMR for last five years (India & Jharkhand)

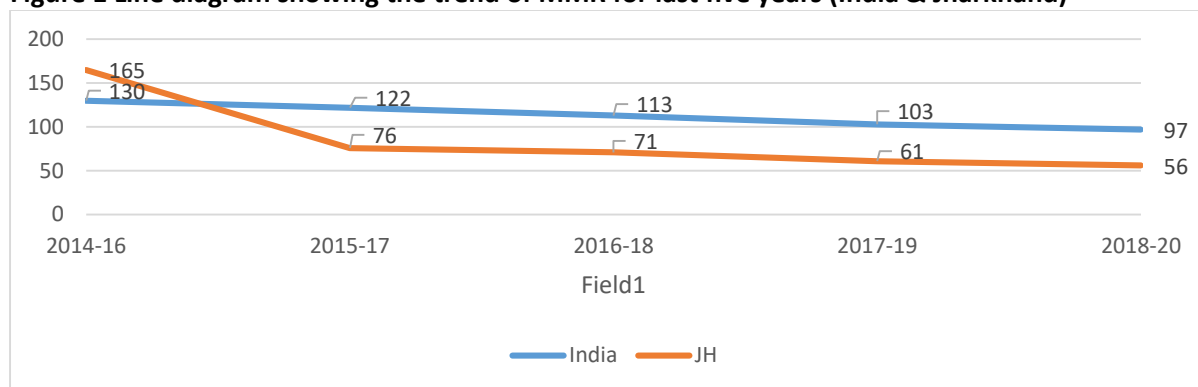
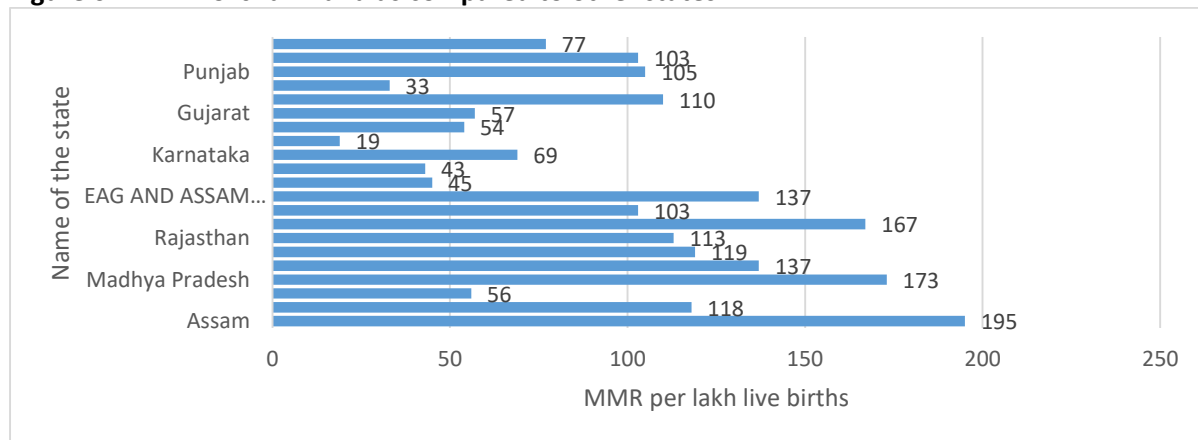


Figure 02: MMR of Jharkhand as compared to other states



Therefore, it can be concluded that the MMR is on the decline and that we are not far behind the global SDG target of MMR less than 70 as maternal health indicators gradually improve in our nation and in Jharkhand.

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