

Estimating the Completeness and Timeliness of Birth Registration in Turkey with an Emphasis on Adolescent Births

F. KESKIN

Institute of Population Studies, Hacettepe University

An important component of the registration system is the birth statistics since the existence of a human being is first recognized by the government via the registration of birth. Birth registration systems also play an important role in the determination of completeness of vital registration systems. In the literature, various methods have been used to test the completeness and timeliness of the birth registration systems for different countries and regions. However, studies for completeness and timeliness of the birth registration system are lacking for Turkey especially after the establishment of Address Based Population Registration System (ABPRS) in 2007.

In Turkey, only civil marriage is legal and the minimum age at marriage is 18. On the other hand, religious marriage is very common in Turkey and adolescent marriages often arranged by religious marriage. In this context, this paper will investigate the completeness of the birth registration system in Turkey with an emphasis on adolescent births. The scope of this paper is to evaluate the data quality of the birth registration system using the Address Based Population Registration System (2009 – 2015) and Turkey Demographic Health Survey (2008 – 2013) data sets in order to determine completeness and timeliness of the birth registration. The analyses will be based on the research question of “how complete is the registration of births to adolescent mothers in Address Based Population Registration System?” In this paper, there will be some sub-questions as well, such as; what are the changes in completeness of the adolescent birth statistics data since the establishment of the ABPRS and how completeness of the birth statistics differs in population with respect to mother’s demographic properties.

The data acquired from TurkSTAT will allow an analysis of registration of births in different aspects. With the registration gaps (time interval between birth and registration) of every birth ever registered starting from 2009, a trend of registration completeness can be observed for Turkey in general, for 81 provinces, with respect to mother's usual place of residence and for the sex of the child. TDHS-2013 results indicate 98.8 percentage of de jure children under five years of age in Turkey have registered their births. Male children and children in urban places of residence are more likely to register according to the survey. The results of the survey also show that from 2008 to 2013 the percentage of registered children in Turkey increased 5 percentages, from 93.7 in the TDHS-2008 to 98.8 in the TDHS-2013. Analysis of the TurkSTAT data will not only allow to see the completeness of the registration system starting from 2009, but also allows a comparison of the sample survey and the registration system results. The registration interval and timeliness of the registration will be discussed as well. The teen pregnancy and adolescent marriage has decreased in Turkey for the last decade but the completeness of the birth registration hasn't been revealed for the ABPRS system. This research will mainly intend to fill this gap.