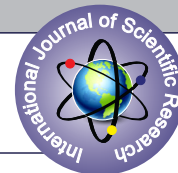


A STUDY OF THE UNNATURAL DEATHS COMING TO THE MORTUARY OF SILCHAR MEDICAL COLLEGE AND HOSPITAL FOR POST-MORTEM EXAMINATION: A RETROSPECTIVE STUDY.



Forensic Medicine

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ABSTRACT

With the increase civilization the number of unnatural deaths are also increasing. The death due to vehicular accident is more in developing countries than in developed countries. The prevailing system of dowry remains one of the major cause of deaths due to burn or by other means (Dowry death). This retrospective study was conducted in the department of forensic medicine, Silchar during the period from 1st September 2019 to 31st August 2020. During this period a total number of 710 autopsies were carried out, out of which 649 cases were death due to unnatural causes.

KEYWORDS

Unnatural death, Dowry death, Burn, vehicular accidents.

INTRODUCTION:

With the increase civilization the number of unnatural deaths are also increasing. The death due to vehicular accident is more in developing countries than in developed countries. In India one person dies in less than every five minutes due to vehicular accidents (3). Ignorance and intentional violation of traffic rules, encroachment of roads by animals, shopkeeper play an important role in contributing to increase of vehicular accidents (6). Again with the increase in civilization, the expectations are also increasing resulting in increased number of suicide cases. Hanging and poisoning are the most common and easiest way for committing suicide in developing countries. Poisoning is a major problem all over the world. The use of poisons for suicidal and homicidal purposes dates back to the Vedic era of India. It is reported that 1 to 1.5 million cases of poisoning occur every year (1). Other than these Fire have been held in great reverence and fear in the Indian psyche. Even in Shushruta's ancient medical treatise gave it the final sterilizing authority. From this back ground, setting oneself on fire may have been arrived at, as an Indian means of honourable suicide (4). The burn fatalities in India go beyond the meaning implied in the term accident and the impact they cause, no longer remains confined to the family but spreads far wide to be aptly termed as a social calamity (7). The prevailing system of dowry remains one of the major cause of such deaths. Drowning, fall from height, electrocution, snake bit, homicides are the other causes of unnatural death. With the increase in poverty the rates of homicides are also increasing. Crime rate in a community is directly linked with the rate of poverty and literacy. (2)

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

1. To find the age group.
2. To find the sex ratio.
3. To find the cause of death.
4. To find the time since death.
5. To find the most common mode of suicide in this region.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

this retrospective study was conducted in the department of forensic medicine, Silchar medical College and hospital, during the period from 1st September 2019 to 31st August 2020. All the unnatural deaths were included in the study. All the natural deaths and all the deaths where the cause of death could not be ascertained (obscure and negative autopsied) were excluded from the study. During the period a total number of 710 cases were autopsied, out of which 649 cases were unnatural cases and included for the study.

OBSERVATION AND RESULTS:

Out of total 710 cases 649 cases were unnatural deaths.

In the present study it is found that most of the victims were male, comprising of 69% of the total deaths.

Most of the victims were between the age group of 31 to 40 Years.

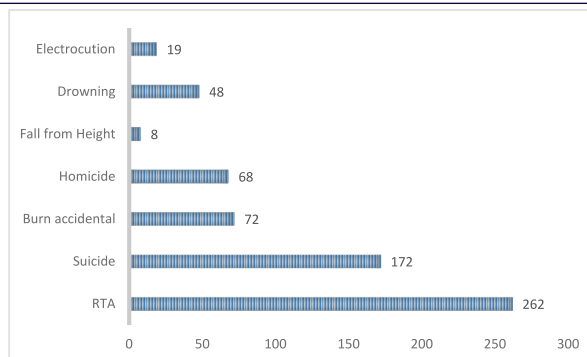


Fig: RTA is the most common cause of unnatural death.

In the present study it is found that, RTA is the common cause in urban area, whereas suicide is the commonest form of unnatural death in rural areas.

Among the suicide cases hanging is found to be the most common mode followed by poisoning.

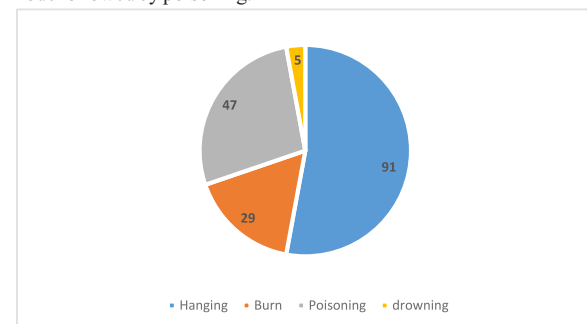


Fig: Mode of suicide.

The most common cause of death in RTA cases was Coma, followed by haemorrhagic shock.

In Homicide cases head injury is found to be the most common cause of death followed by burn and stab injury.

Most of the victims were examined between 12 to 24 hours of death.

DISCUSSION:

In the present study it is found that unnatural death cases supersede the natural deaths. More than 2/3rd cases are death due to unnatural causes.

The findings are similar to the findings of Sharma et al (5). Most of the victims were male and in the age group of 31 to 40 years. The findings are different from the findings of Sharma et al, who found the common age group was 21 to 30 years. In India males are the bread earner for the family. And as a result the face more threats than females and resulting in more unnatural deaths. In Urban areas the number of vehicles are more resulting in increased vehicular accidents in urban areas. The increased work load, pressure of work all contributes to the increased cases in urban areas. Whereas in rural areas unemployment, poverty, all contributes to increased suicide rates in rural areas. Being the easiest way hanging was being chosen by most of the victims of suicide. The finding is different from the finding of Sharma et al (5) and other studies, where poisoning was reported to be the commonest mode of suicide adopted. Quite a good number of cases were found to be homicide cases. Again limited job opportunity, unemployment and increased desire all contributes to such cases.

CONCLUSION:

Death being the most unacceptable event it remains the most painful truth also. Death of a single person brings lots of troubles to the whole family. Moreover, the unnatural death brings lots of burden to the entire community and administration. There are only a very few ways by which we can minimise such events. Mass education, increased job opportunity and proper channelization of all government services can to some extent help to reduce such catastrophes. Government should take action against all dowry deaths and try to reduce such events.

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