

# **Predictors of birth certificate possession among children aged 0-17 years in Zimbabwe: An analysis based on the 2012 Population Census**

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# Introduction

- A birth certificate is confirmation of a child's existence, nationality, place of birth, parentage and age.
- Globally, an estimated 650 million children aged between 0-16 years have unregistered births (Gelb & Metz 2018)
- Nearly half or 230 million of the world's children under 5 years old remain unregistered (UNICEF, 2013)
- In 2015, 32.2% of the children under the age five were reported as registered in Zimbabwe (ZIMSTAT, 2015)

# Introduction cont'

- No African country has achieved a complete system of civil registration and vital statistics (CRVS) with a few exceptions such as islands nations (UNICEF, 2017).
- Birth registration or ownership having since been recognized as a fundamental human right as enshrined in Article 7 of the Convention on Rights of the Child

# Introduction cont'

- Multiple studies (DHS, Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys, Research Studies done by individuals) have examined the predictors of birth ownership none have utilized census data

# Aim

- The paper seeks to address the issue by looking at predictors of birth possession using various demographic and socio-economic variables of the head of the household and individuals

# Methodology

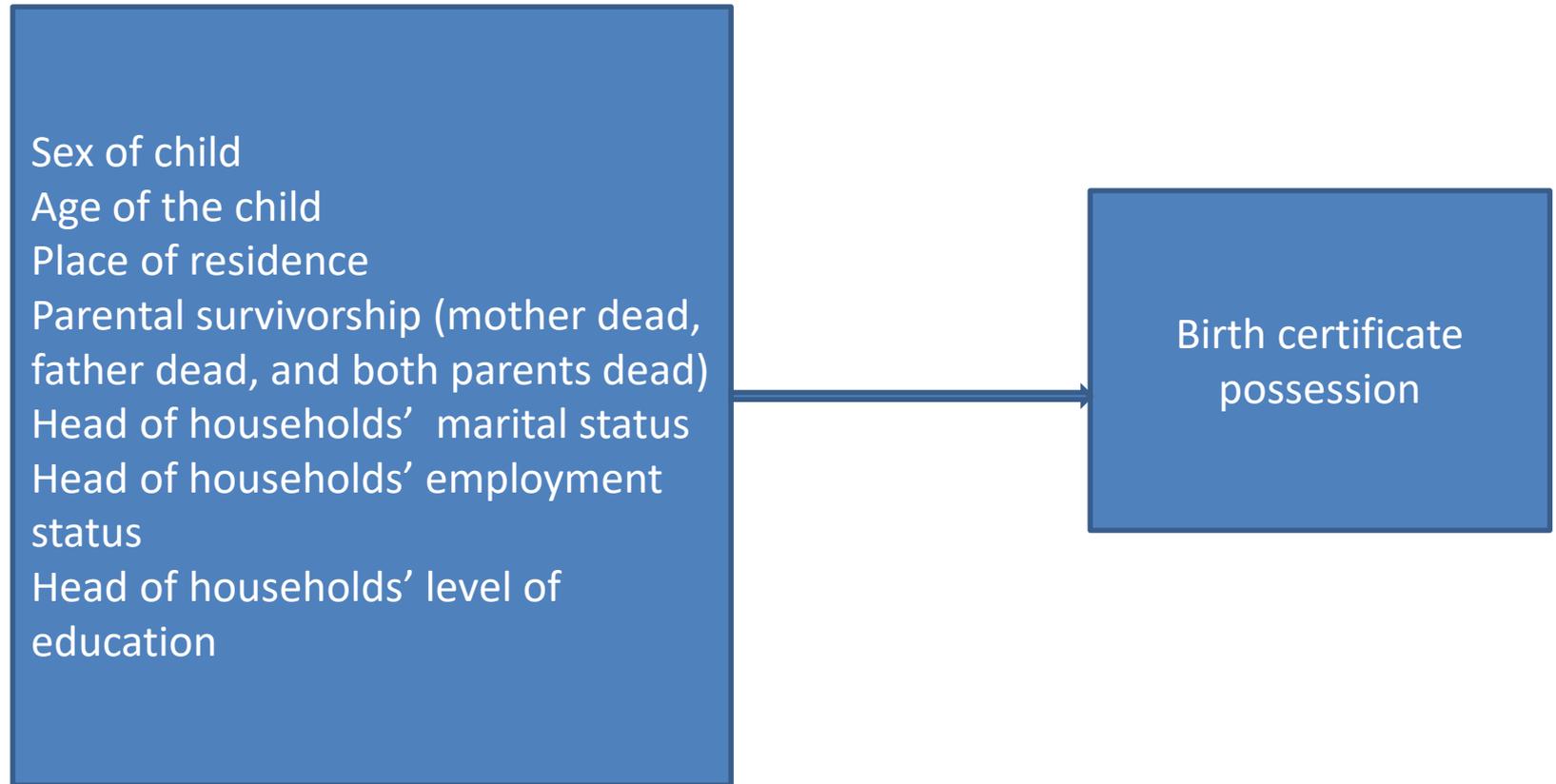
- Data was drawn from the 2012 Zimbabwe National Population Census
- Birth certificate ownership was restricted to children aged 0-17 years
- The **dependent variable** was assessed by “Does (*name*) have a birth certificate?” Responses to this question were either “Yes”, or “No” or “Not known”.

# Methodology cont'

## ❖ Independent variables

- Sex of child
- Age of the child
- Place of residence
- Parental survivorship (mother dead, father dead, and both parents dead)
- Head of households' marital status
- Head of households' employment status
- Head of households' level of education

# Conceptual Framework



Conceptual Framework Source: Authors' own construct

# Methods of data analysis

- Descriptive analytical tools (frequencies, percentage and cross tabulations)
- Binary logistic regression analysis were used to examine the predictors of birth certificate ownership among children aged 0-17 years

# Key Findings

- Less than sixty percent (58.9%) of the children possessed a birth certificate and 41.1% had no birth certificate
- Male children were more likely to have had a birth certificate than female children (OR =1.04,  $p < 0.001$ )
- All children in the 8 provinces were more likely to have had a birth certificate compared to children from Harare
- However, exceptional results were revealed in Manicaland Province where children from this province were less likely to have had a birth certificate compared to children from Harare

# Results cont'

- Children who had their mother dead were less likely to have a birth certificate compared to those with both parents dead.
- Children from households' with a married head were 1.3 times more likely to have had a birth certificate compared to those with a formerly married head.
- Children whose head of household had no education were 4.7 times more likely to have had a birth certificate than those with tertiary education

- Children whose head of household had attained a secondary level education were more likely to have had a birth certificate compared to those with tertiary education (OR =2.19,p<0.0001)
- The odds of the head of households' who were employed that had children with birth certificates were higher than those with heads who reported to be unemployed

# Policy implications

- Attention should be paid to children who have lost a mother or father, to the girl child, to those in the older age groups, to those whose head of households' had a tertiary education to ensure that they possess a birth certificate as their birth right.
- We also advocate the establishment of community based birth registration centers to improve accessibility and practice of birth registration

# Study limitations

- Birth registration was assessed using one question
- No second question required that the birth certificate be seen by the interviewer
- Thus, birth registration may have been overreported/ underreported in this study