

Regarding “Post-mortem ocular changes”

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Dear Editor,

We have read with great interest the preliminary report entitled “Post-mortem ocular changes: A study on autopsy cases in Bharatpur hospital” by B.K. Prasad¹ published in one of the recent issues of Kathmandu University Medical Journal.

In the ‘materials and methods’, it has been mentioned that the study was conducted on the dead in the mortuary. The parameters mentioned, said to have been done by an ophthalmologist, namely., pupillary response, tonometry and fundoscopy assume no significance for the obvious reasons that the dead subjects were examined at least 4 hours after death .

It is quite amusing to note the mention of the ocular findings as ‘dilated and fixed pupils’, ‘dull, lusterless and opaque cornea’, ‘sunken eyes into the orbital fossa’. These findings are ought to have been there in all cadavers. Moreover, the time since death (post-mortem interval) at autopsy isn’t categorically mentioned.

It is emphasized in the ‘conclusion’ that the description of various postmortem eye changes is important for developing eye banking services. This appears to be a vague comment as other than the viability of cornea, no other ocular changes seem to have any significance in eye banking services or programmes. Should there be any significance, it should have been aptly mentioned and justified.

As a customary remark, further study on the topic is suggested, without making a sincere effort as to the significance and scope for the same.

The objective of the article is rather confusing. The study was conducted to observe post-mortem eye changes, the reasons for which haven’t been elaborated. The write-up neither introduces a new concept nor contradicts the existing information on estimation of postmortem time interval from ocular changes. The study would have been more informative, had it been carried out on a clear objective so as to draw a solid conclusion.

References

1. Prasad BK. Post-mortem ocular changes: A study on autopsy cases in Bharatpur hospital. Kathmandu Univ Med J (KUMJ) 2003; 1: 276-7.

Letter to the Editor

Letter to the editor is welcome and generally should not exceed 500 words and cite more than three references. It should reach in time to be included in the next issue or journal. Correspondent should include job title, and their address. Letter should be sent to the Editor’s Office.