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Factors affecting the utilization of maternal and child health care services in North Gujarat

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Abstract---The present study intended to examine the factors affecting the utilization of maternal health care services in the north Gujarat region of India. The study used Data collected from various hospitals of different districts of North Gujarat. Both bivariate and multivariate techniques have been applied for data analysis. Logistic regression techniques and concentration curve and index have been used. Findings of the study indicate that there were wider socio-economic differential exits in the utilization of MCH services (full ANC, Safe delivery and post-natal care) in all the district under study. The result shows that the farther population from healthcare centre is less likely to utilize maternal and child health care services. The economic inequality in accessing the all three components of maternal health care utilization was higher in the urban area. As the educational level, wealth index, employment, atonomy and exposure to mass media of women increases the utilization of these services increases significantly.

Keywords---adolescents, maternal health, utilisation of health services, maternal health services, ante-natal care (ANC), delivery, socioeconomic factors, postnatal care (PNC), female Genital Mutilation (FGM), mother and child tracking system (MCTS).

Introduction

Various nations have already announced a plenty of schemes and policies to enhance the availability and accessibility in the utilization of maternal health care services around the globe. Substantial studies have been shown that, utilization of essential maternal and child health services have great role in reducing the maternal morbidities and mortality.[3],[4]. The quality of maternal care during pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum period could reduce pregnancy related complications and can increase the positive childbirth experience for women. However, it is evident that women in tribal areas lack of access to adequate care during pregnancy, delivery and postpartum period.[5],[6] . The complex phenomena of utilisation of maternal and child health services affected by many factors, studies are established the association between various factors and utilization patterns with one or more factors.[7]. Inadequate access and under-utilization of modern healthcare services are reported to be major reasons for poor health in the tribal dominated states [8],[9] . Several studies have examined factors affecting utilization of maternal health services.[10],[11].

Many programmes and initiatives have been implemented in India for instance Janani Suraksha Yojana, Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakaram, Matrima, Matrika and so on. Several studies have examined factors affecting utilization of maternal health services. Utilization of reproductive health services is in turn related to their availability and socio-economic, demographic and cultural factors such as women's age, education, employment, caste and autonomy. Access to health care facilities in terms of distance and who provided health care are major factors that influenced utilisation of services [2] . Apart from above all factors women's autonomy is also a major determinant of utilization of maternal and child care services, women with greater freedom of movement are more likely to utilize antenatal and delivery care [1]. Community and programmatic factors had strong association with the utilisation of maternal health services, community factors include the current state of knowledge as well as people's attitude and beliefs about health and illness, programmatic factors include health service resources and the organization of health services, availability of and system of health care providers.[9], [12] ,[13].

Data And Methods

Data Source

The study results are based on data collected from various hospitals of north Gujarat from different districts. Systematic random sampling was adopted to select the candidates. The collected data provides wealth of information on family planning, maternal and child health, reproductive health, and utilization of maternal and child health care services, communicable and non-communicable disease for all districts of North Gujarat. For this study we have considered all four districts of North Gujarat.

Techniques

In the present paper. The bi-variate analysis applied to show the pattern of the relationship between predictor variables and outcome variables. In multivariate analysis logistic regression technique has been used to show the significant association between socio-economic, demographic variable and maternal health care services utilization, namely full ANC, safe delivery and postnatal care.

Description of the Variables

- **Full antenatal care (ANC):** At least five visits for antenatal check-up, one TT injection received, Blood test done and Adequate amount of IFA tablets or syrup of consumed.
- **Safe Delivery (SD):** Either institutional delivery or home delivery attended by skilled health personnel (Doctor/ANM/Nurse/midwife/LHV/Other health personnel).
- **Post Natal Care (PNC):** Defined as the any medical check-up of the mother within first week of termination of pregnancy or childbirth.

Explanatory Variables

All the possible socio-economic variables have been included in the study. The explanatory variables such as mother age at the time of marriage and at child birth, birth order (1st birth, 2-3, 4p), place of residence (urban vs. rural), religion (Hindu, Muslim and other), caste (SC, ST and other), women's education (no education, primary, secondary and higher), husband's education (No education, primary, secondary and higher), wealth index (poorest, poor, middle, rich and richest), working status of women (not working vs. working), media exposure (no exposure vs. Any exposure), and head of the household (male vs. female) were included in the study.

Results and Analysis

This study examines the association between distance to healthcare centre and the utilization of maternal healthcare services in five districts of North Gujarat, while accounting for sociodemographic factors as well.

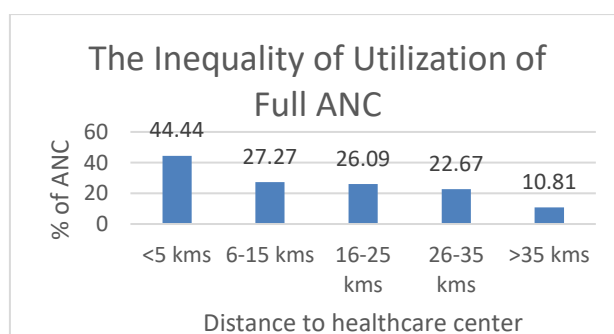


Figure 1

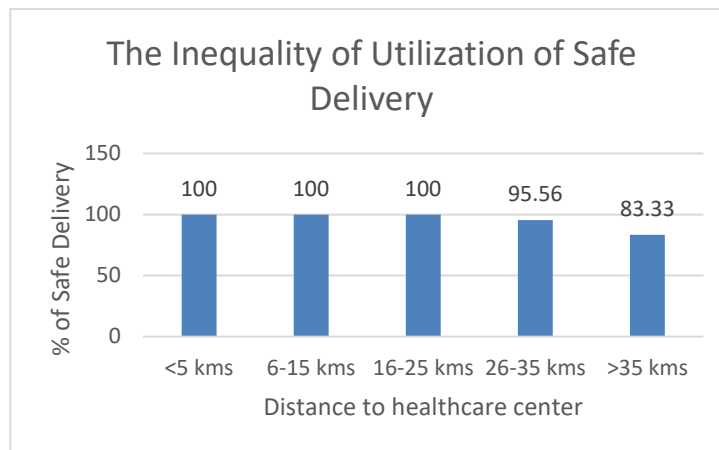


Figure. 2

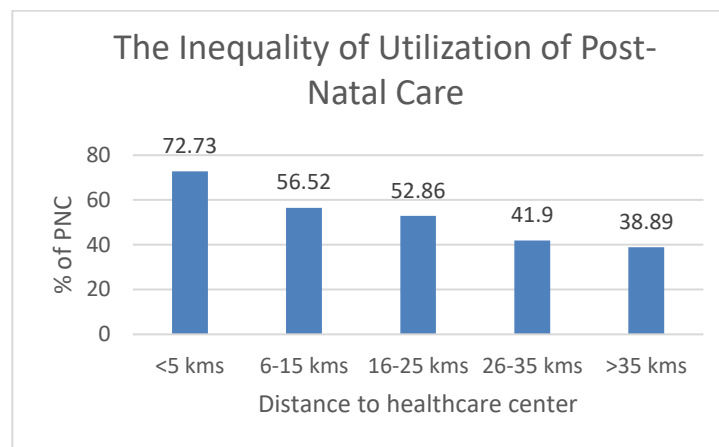


Figure. 3

Discussion

Studies in Figure 1, 2 and 3 have shown that Utilization of health care services is affected by a multitude of factors but the present studies have tried to correlate between distance to healthcare centre and the utilization of health care services. The result shows that the farther population from healthcare centre is less likely to utilize maternal and child health care services.

Conclusion

The utilization of maternal health services among the all districts of north Gujarat are good but still needs to improve. Awareness program through various media channels, micro level campaigning, accessibility to remote villages, proper and frequent training of health care provider, strengthening the MCTS (Mother and Child Tracking System), and monitoring system can make a difference and can reduce thousands of maternal deaths. Further, government schemes to provide

maternal health services to farther communities should consider the community level factors affecting to maternal health care utilization.

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