Impact of socioeconomic factors on health outcomes in India

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ABSTRACT

The issue of socioeconomic inequality within India has only continue to grow with urbanization over the years. The presence of this inequality within both rural and urban settings of India creates situations in which those who need access to quality evidence-based medical treatments do not have access to it. The reason for this lack of access is not because the technology does not exist to resolve the medical issue, but rather because the funding for certain types of medical equipment is not available in certain areas of India. The disparity in health outcomes based on socioeconomic status is staggering- this presentation seeks to locate and bring awareness to incidences of the highest disparities in health outcomes by analyzing various (economic) metrics.

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Introduction

- ❑India has the second largest population in the world
- ❑India has a GDP of 2.623 Trillion USD, just under the GDP of the UK.
- ❑Regardless of economic progress and advancements in technology over the years, health outcomes in India vary greatly depending on factors such as caste, gender, and wealth.
- ❑Health policy within India was centered around deliverance of basic health services post-independence.
- ❑Is there a set of policies that could be set in place to improve health outcomes for sets of people that are disadvantaged by the current system of medical care within India?

Methods and Materials

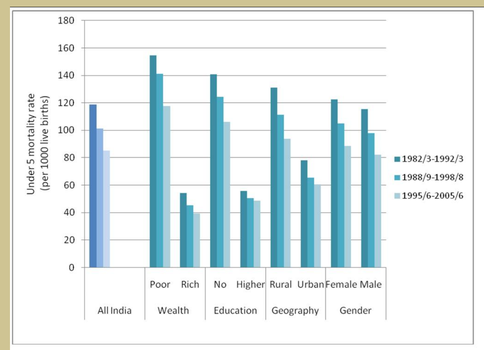
- ❑ Referred works included systemic literature searches and meta-analyses to offer information regarding health outcomes in India.
- ❑ The method of research conducted for this project includes the analyzation of economic statistics, as well as reviewing content from studies on equity and health disparities within India.

Discussion & Conclusion

- ❑ Socioeconomic factors are known to have a profound effect on having access to necessities- when it comes to healthcare, the same remains true.
- ❑ Those who were classified as having access to a high status of wealth, higher education, urban living conditions, and being of the male gender have lower under 5 mortality rates when compared to their alternatives.
- ❑ The lowest incidence of under 5 mortality was found in rich populations, with the highest incidence being experienced by poor populations- applying to all year ranges depicted in Figure 1.
- ❑ Uttar Pradesh has the highest incidence of under 5 mortality rate by state, with a state domestic product per capita of under 20000 (NFHS, 2006). Goa, having the highest state domestic product per capita, experiences the second lowest under 5 mortality rate, with Kerala having the lowest under 5 mortality rate despite not having the highest state domestic product per capita.
- ❑ There is a noticeable disparity in the under 5 mortality rate according to differences in wealth, education, geography and gender. The category with the largest disparity would be wealth.
- ❑ Basic income policies could serve as a potential solution to the disparity in health outcomes within India, granted much infrastructural change and political support would be necessary

Results

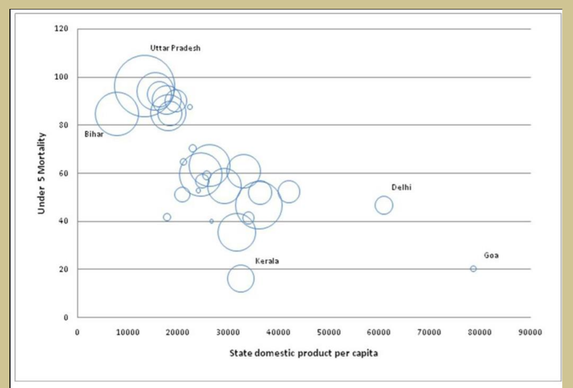
Figure 1. Under 5 mortality rate including background characteristics



Source: NFHS 1992/3, NFHS 1998/9 and NFHS 2005/6

Notes: Under-5 mortality rates for the ten-year period preceding the survey, by selected background characteristics (excludes month of interview from analysis); Inequalities are presented in the following manner: Wealth: poorest quintile vs. richest quintile; Education: no education vs. higher education.

Figure 2. Under 5 mortality rate vs state domestic product per capita.



Sources: NFHS 2005/6, Census of India, Central Statistical Organisation of India.

Notes: Size of circle proportional to state population.

- ❑ This graph depicts the mortality rate for children under 5 years old during three different timespans (NFHS, 1992).
- ❑ The most recent of the three readings as depicted on the graph by the light blue bar displays how the under 5 mortality rate has decreased over the years, but also continues to display how different factors greatly impact the under 5 mortality rate; such as wealth, education, and gender.
- ❑ Notably, the lowest incidence of under 5 mortality was found in the "rich" subsection of the wealth category- indicating how the wealthy experience infant mortality at a much lower rate than the poor and at a lower rate than all other subsections of the categories included in the study.

- ❑ This graph (NFHS, 2006), displays the relative incidence of under 5 mortality in different states of India- the x-axis displays the state domestic product per capita while the y-axis shows infant mortality.
- ❑ Based on the graph (NFHS, 2006), Uttar Pradesh leads in terms of under 5 mortality and additionally has the second lowest state domestic product per capita, with Bihar having a slightly better under 5 mortality rate but an even lower state domestic product per capita.
- ❑ Goa and Delhi have the two highest state domestic product per capita and also experience the lowest under 5 mortality rates aside from Kerala which has the lowest under 5 mortality rate.

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