

Investigating Spatial Disparities in Health Status and Access to Health-Related Interventions among Tribals in Jharkhand

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Abstract : Indigenous communities represent some of the most marginalized populations globally, with India labeled as tribals, experiencing particularly pronounced marginalization and a concerning decline in their numbers. These communities often inhabit geographically challenging regions characterized by low population densities, posing significant challenges to providing essential infrastructure services. Jharkhand, a Schedule 5 state, is infamous for its low-level health status due to disparities in access to health care. The primary objective of this study is to investigate the spatial inequalities in healthcare accessibility among tribal populations within the state and pinpoint critical areas requiring immediate attention. Health indicators were selected based on the tribal perspective and association of Sustainable Goal 3 (Good Health and Wellbeing) with other SDGs. Focused group discussions in which tribal people and tribal experts were done in order to finalize the indicators. Employing Principal Component Analysis, two essential indices were constructed: the Tribal Health Index (THI) and the Tribal Health Intervention Index (THII). Index values were calculated based on the district-wise secondary data for Jharkhand. The bivariate spatial association technique, Moran's I was used to assess the spatial pattern of the variables to determine if there is any clustering (positive spatial autocorrelation) or dispersion (negative spatial autocorrelation) of values across Jharkhand. The results helped in facilitating targeting policy interventions in deprived areas of Jharkhand.

Keywords : tribal health, health spatial disparities, health status, Jharkhand

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