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Socio-economic inequality in utilization of maternal health care in India, 2005-16: A decomposition analysis

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Health and socio-economic developments are so closely intertwined that it is impossible to achieve one without the other. The gap in access and utilize to maternal health care services is a big challenge for India. To decompose the socio-economic inequality in the utilization of maternal health care in India, 2005-16 and to explain the contribution of affecting factors. By using NFHS-3 (2005-06) and NFHS-4 data (2015-16), we have applied bivariate technic, concentration index, concentration curve and Wagstaff decomposition method for analysis. The findings of the study show that there is pro-rich inequality in utilization of antenatal care, skilled attendants at birth and postnatal care in India during 2005-16 and inequality in utilization of maternal health care has been decreased during 2005-16 in India. The results show that for skilled attendants at birth, CI is 0.30 and for postnatal care, CI is 0.36 in 2005-06. Percentage contribution of the place of residence in inequality in the utilization of antenatal care has decreased from -38.05% to 14.79% during 2005-16. Education (32.92%) and birth order (-21.82%) were contributing to inequality in 2005-06. In utilization of postnatal care services, the contribution of place of residence, birth order, education and caste were -130 %, -63%, 59% and 20% in 2005-06; while in 2015-16, the contribution of these factors was -43%, -38%, 49% and 1.25%, respectively. The findings of the study demonstrated that education, birth order, caste and place of residence were dominant factors which have been contributing more than others and inequality has reduced during 2005-16.

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