

Social Capital and the Utilization of Maternal and Child Health Services in India: A Multilevel Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the association between social capital and the utilization of three types of maternal and child health services—antenatal care, professional delivery care, and childhood immunizations—using the 2005 India Human Development Survey. The analytic sample includes 10,991 women who recently gave birth and 7,596 children between one and five years of age nested within 2,300 villages or urban neighborhoods. Exploratory factor analysis was used to create and validate six social capital measures. These measures were used in multilevel logistic regression models at the individual and community level to examine whether each form of social capital had an independent, contextual effect on health care use, beyond the characteristics of individual women belonging to a community. Results show that the association between social capital and health care use operates primarily at the community level and varies by the type of care utilized.