

Selection of PHCs for Evaluation of Family Welfare Programme in a Developing Country : Alternative Methods and Applications

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The existence of large number of Primary Health Centres (PHCs) and the paucity of resources (money, time and labour), often compel the policy makers to selecting a set of few representative PHCs as the spatial bases for evaluation of family welfare programme. In this context, this paper develops simple (non-stochastic and non-axiomatic) methods for selecting representative PHCs in different levels of programmes' performance, such as, good, average and poor levels of performance. The alternative methods are implemented for actual PHC data in the Chitradurga district of Karnataka State in South India. The empirical results indicate the operational validity of analytical methods and the sensitivity of selection of representative PHCs with regard to the methods. From the policy viewpoint, the alternative classifications of PHCs according to performance levels indicate the need for differential and area-specific approach to evaluation of family welfare programme. Finally, subject to the availability of comparable performance data, the simple methods developed in this paper can be replicated for selection of PHCs elsewhere in developing countries.

1. Introduction

An important public policy for betterment of health care in India is the family welfare programme by the federal government. The programme contains not only the methods of birth control which are aimed at promoting planned parenthood with a two child norm, but also measures for betterment of maternal and child health conditions. The important methods of birth control are Sterilisations (vasectomy and tubectomy), IUD (loop or Cu 'T'), Conventional Contraceptives (e.g., condom) and Oral Pills (e.g., Mala-D). On the other hand, maternal and child health measures are aimed at preventing maternal and child mortality and morbidity. The measures cover ante-natal, natal, and post-natal care of mothers as well as infants and pre-school children, such as, (i) immunisation