

**Application of Geographical Information System in
Understanding the Accessibility and Utilization Primary Health
Centres:
A District Level Study of Rural India**

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ABSTRACT. Health is an important indicator to determine the over all development of a Country. Disease free nation leads to high level of productivity of human being and so it is an important element. This disease free nation can be attained by improving the health and nutritional status of the population. One of the ways of achieving it, is through improved access to and utilisation of health services with special focus on the underserved and under privileged segment of population. Fortunately, the health care services in India are equivalently provided to all, ignoring the caste, colour, creed and sex. The task of accessibility can be attained by establishing sub centres, primary health centres, community health centres and hospitals in remote and inaccessible areas. Primary health centres are an effective way of delivering health care in the rural areas. It is an imperative strategy to provide "Health For All" and is widely acknowledged as a universal solution for improving well being of population in the world. The present study focuses on the evaluating the status of accessibility and utilization of health care facilities in the second highest populated country of the world. The number and type of barriers to accessibility of primary health centres differ from country to country and time to time. Affordability, acceptability and accommodation are the three non spatial barriers to the utilization and accessibility are spatial in context . Availability in context to PHC refers to the number of health care service points and accessibility is travel impedance i.e., distance or time between the residential or demand areas and PHC. In this paper, availability and accessibility are considered as spatial accessibility and the aim is to determine if PHC's are equitably distributed in the Nadia District of West Bengal state of India. The future allocation of the lowest order central facility is done with the help of Geographical Information Centre.

Key words: Geographical Information System, Primary Health

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