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# Topic wise content



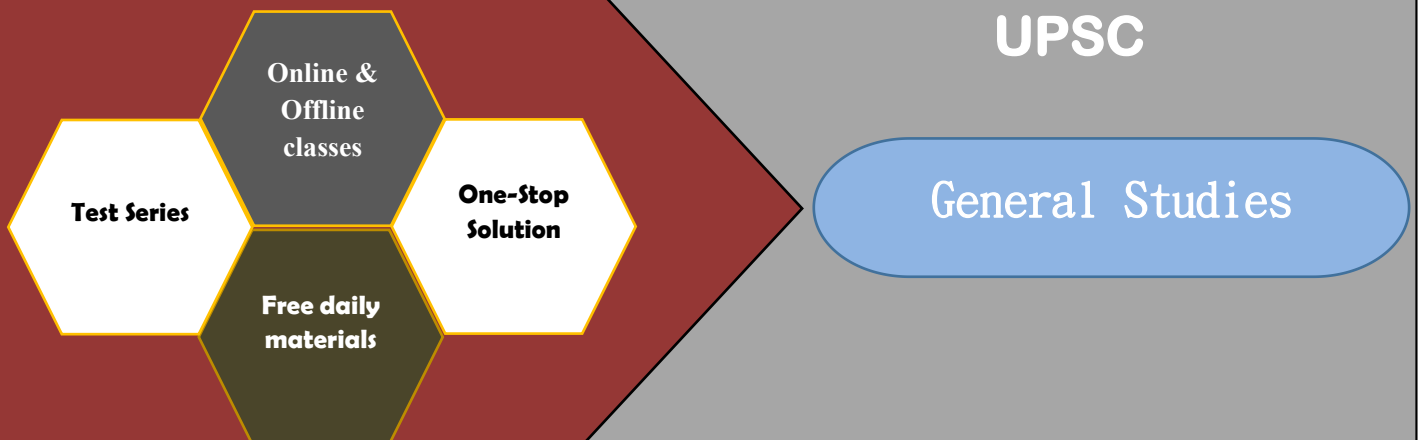
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## India Inequality Report 2021: Oxfam

Notes for civil services preparation



## India Inequality Report 2021: Oxfam

- The report titled “**India Inequality Report 2021: India’s Unequal Healthcare Story**” released by **Oxfam India** shows that the socio-economic inequalities seep into the health sector and disproportionately affect health outcomes of **marginalised communities** due to the absence of **Universal Health Coverage (UHC)**.
- The report suggested that the states which are attempting to reduce existing inequalities and with higher expenditure on health had lower confirmed cases of **Covid-19**.

## Key Points

### About the Report:

- It provides a comprehensive analysis of the health outcomes across different socioeconomic groups to gauge the level of health inequality that persists in the country.
- The findings are primarily based on secondary analysis from rounds 3 and 4 of the **National Family Health Survey** and various rounds of the **National Sample Survey**.

### Finding of the Report:

- **Performance of Different Groups:** The general category performs better than SCs and STs; Hindus perform better than Muslims; the rich perform better than the poor; men are better off than women; and the urban population is better off than the rural population on various health indicators.
- The Covid-19 pandemic has further exacerbated these inequalities.
- **Performance of States:** The **states that have for the past few years been reducing inequalities**, such as inequalities to access to health between the general category and SC and ST populations, **have less confirmed cases of Covid** – such as Telangana, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan.
- On the other hand, **states that have had higher GDP expenditure on health**, such as Assam, Bihar and Goa, have **higher recovery rates of Covid cases**.
- **Kerala invested in infrastructure** to create a multi-layered health system, designed to provide first-contact access for basic services at the community level and expanded primary healthcare coverage to achieve access to a range of preventive and curative services.
- **Rural-Urban Divide:** It was highlighted during the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, when rural areas witnessed a shortage of tests, oxygen and hospital beds.
- **Doctor-person Ratio:** The National Health Profile in 2017 recorded one government allopathic doctor for every 10,189 people and one state-run hospital for every 90,343 people.
- **Hospital Beds:** The investment in public health infrastructure is so little that the number of beds in the country has actually come down, from 9 beds per 10,000 persons in the 2010 Human Development Report, to only 5 beds per 10,000 persons today.
- India also **ranks the lowest in the number of hospital beds per thousand population among the BRICS nations** at 0.5. It is lower than lesser developed countries such as Bangladesh (0.87), Chile (2.11) and Mexico (0.98).

- **Women Literacy:** While women's literacy has improved across social groups over the years, SC and ST women lag behind the general category by 18.6% and 27.9%, respectively.
- There exists a gap of 55.1% between the top and bottom 20% of the population in 2015-16.
- Though the female literacy rate among Muslims (64.3%) is lower than all religious groups, inequality has reduced over time.
- **Sanitation:** As far as sanitation is concerned, 65.7% households have access to improved, non-shared sanitation facilities in the general category while SC households are 28.5% behind them and ST are 39.8% behind them.
- While 93.4% of households in the top 20% have access to improved sanitation, only 6% have access in the bottom 20% — a difference of 87.4%.
- **Immunisation:** The immunisation in ST households at 55.8% is still 6.2% below the national average, and Muslims have the lowest rate across all socio-religious groups at 55.4%.
- The rate of immunisation of girls continues to be below that of the male child.
- More than 50% of children still do not receive food supplements in the country.
- **Life Expectancy:** Life expectancy based on wealth is 65.1 years for the bottom 20% of the households, while it is 72.7 years for the top 20%.
- **Antenatal Care:** Percentage of mothers who have received full antenatal care declined from 37% in 2005-06 to 21% in 2015-16.
- The share of institutional deliveries in India has increased from 38.7% in 2005-06 to 78.9% in 2015-16.
- **Infant Mortality Rate:** Overall improvement in **Infant mortality rate (IMR)** is not equal across social groups. Dalits, Adivasis and OBCs have higher IMR as compared to the general category.
- IMR for Adivasis is 44.4 which is 40% more than the general category and 10% more than the national average.

### Conclusion

- To stabilise and equalise this inequality, universal health coverage should be supported strongly by the public sector.
- Persistent underfunding of the public health system, especially primary health care and inadequate health infrastructure in India remain to be addressed by the government even after devastating second wave.
- Otherwise, health emergencies will only aggravate existing inequalities and work as a detriment for the poor and the marginalised.

