
How unfair are inequalities in health? Perceptions of distributive justice under China's health system reforms

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Abstract (in French and English)

Health system reform is the most extensive among China's social security reforms and remains a priority under Xi Jinping's new government. An important rationale is to strengthen the legitimacy of CCP rule through enhancing the government's performance in delivering healthcare and other basic social services.

This paper draws on data from a 2014 national survey on Chinese perceptions of inequality and distributive justice to explore the relationship between popular perceptions and fairness preferences, on the one hand, and distributive principles inherent in the emerging healthcare system, on the other. To what extent are health inequalities perceived as unfair? How do people view the government's role in health care? How have perceptions changed over the course of reforms? And how do perceptions vary across population groups?

A national survey of Chinese perceptions of inequality and distributive justice from 2014 provides new data on popular perceptions two years into the Xi administration's tenure. Comparisons will be conducted with similar surveys from 2004 and 2009. The surveys were conducted by Beijing University, Harvard University and Fafo.

Keywords: China, health system reform, distributive justice, fairness

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