

## What causes poor child health in India? Reflections from NFHS-5

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### Abstract

This paper, based on the data from the NFHS-5, examines various indicators of child health in India. A variety of correlates have been considered in order to understand the causes of poor health outcomes and reflect on effective strategies which may contribute to better health of the children. The inter-spatial variations bring out certain specific patterns based on which insights are developed. A major deterioration in the food value seems to have occurred, causing stunting, wasting, underweight and anemia among the children. Mothers' diet, access to medicines, antenatal care and education and participation in the decision-making process within the household are some of the important factors to bring in improvement in child health. Besides, the role of sanitation, vaccine and breast feeding comes out clearly in restoring the health of the children. Some of these findings have important policy implications.

**Keywords:** Health, child, food, nutrition, NFHS, India