

Child Health and its Determinants in Developing Countries:A Cross Country Comparison

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This study analyses and compares child health in Pakistan, Peru, Jamaica, Russia and South Africa. These countries, which are culturally, economically and politically quite diverse, display considerable variation in the state of child health, and in the nature and magnitude of the effects of its determinants. Country rankings based on per capita GNP correlate poorly with that based on child health. The results on combined country data show strong country effects and of its interactions with household characteristics in the child health regressions. They also show that children in female headed households enjoy superior health in the long run, though this effect weakens in the richer countries. The data does not support the idea that infant girls are nutritionally more deprived than boys. However, while increasing household size leads to a deterioration in the nutritional status of children in that household, the results suggest a differential impact between a marginal boy and a marginal girl on the child health status. The results confirm the importance of female education in improving child health.

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