

**Reducing Gender Gaps in Child Immunization in Rural India: Does Women's Education
at the Community Level Matter?**

By

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In India, a loss of "female advantage" in health has been observed because established gender norms and values override the biological advantage of being born female. Ideally, gender differentials in child health may change due to increases in maternal education. However, although a significant body of literature argues that increases in maternal education at the individual level may reduce gender differentials in child health, considerable uncertainty regarding the actual strength and impact persists. Importantly, such analyzes tend to underestimate the larger "dispersion" effect of other women's education, above and beyond the mother's own education. The objective of this study is to investigate whether the education of other women in the community is of substantial importance in reducing gender differentials in child health across rural districts of India. Two levels of data: individual-level data from the 1994 cross-sectional Human Development Profile Index (HDPI) and district-level data from the 1991 Indian Census are used in various hierarchical linear models.