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An Investigation into Factors Affecting Child Undernutrition in Madhya Pradesh

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ABSTRACT Undernutrition has been a major problem in developing countries like India. In this context, this study tries to explore the determinants of child undernutrition in Madhya Pradesh, a socio-economically and demographically backward state of India. Both bivariate and multivariate analyses have been carried out by using National Family Health Survey III data, 2005-06. This study uses four indicators of nutritional status; three of which are anthropometric in nature and the other is Iron Deficiency Anemia. Logistic regression models revealed that education of the mother, poverty, social group membership, birth order, nutritional status of mother etc are important factors of child undernutrition. As the findings of this paper revealed that children belonging to the socially and economically lagging groups are at a higher risk of malnourishment even after controlling other selected socio-economic factors, holistic programmes need to be undertaken to improve their nutritional status taking their food habits and health behaviour into account.