

Assessment Of Nutritional Status Of School Children In Urban Slum Areas Of Bankura, West Bengal

Mousumi Ganguly¹, Rocky Dolui², Pramita Ghosh², Swastika Mukherjee², Asmita Mondal², Somdev Halder³, Suprakash Pradhan⁴

1. SACT – II, Department of Nutrition, Bankura Sammilani College (Affiliated to Bankura University, Bankura, West Bengal-722102).
2. UG student, Department of Nutrition, Bankura Sammilani College (Affiliated to Bankura University, Bankura, West Bengal-722102).
3. Guest faculty, Department of Nutrition, Bankura Sammilani College (Affiliated to Bankura University, Bankura, West Bengal-722102).
4. SACT – I, Department of Nutrition, Prabhat Kumar College (Affiliated to Vidyasagar University, Contai, Purba Medinipur, West Bengal-721401)

Abstract

Introduction: The health and nutritional status of school children serves as an indicator of a nation's investment in developing its future workforce. Malnutrition hampers both physical and cognitive development in children, making them more vulnerable to infections. This, in turn, indirectly hinders the country's economic growth by limiting the potential of its future human capital.

Aim and objectives: The aim of this study is to evaluate the nutritional status and clinical assessment of urban slum school-children aged 6-9 years in the Bankura District of West Bengal.

Methods: In a cross-sectional study conducted from February 2024 to September 2024, we explored the nutritional status of school-age children living in urban slums in Bankura, West Bengal, India. The study involved 554 children and utilized a pre-designed, pre-tested questionnaire, along with anthropometric measurements and clinical examinations, to assess malnutrition and analyzed its associated factors.

Results: Key clinical signs of malnutrition such as, pallor (81%), discoloured and dry hair (54.87%) and chalky teeth (58.84%), loss of lustre skin (80.14%), skeletal deformities were significantly noted. Anthropometric measurements, including weight and height, were obtained using standard techniques. Body mass index (BMI) was then calculated based on these measurements, using the (WHO) international BMI cut-off points for children. Additionally, the average height, weight and body mass index (BMI) were poor condition.

Conclusions: The study emphasizes that urban slum area school children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds in the Bankura District suffer from varying degrees of malnutrition. Urgent nutritional intervention programme should be given to them.

Keywords: Malnutrition, Nutritional status, Clinical assessment, BMI