

PREVALENCE OF MALNUTRITION IN SCHOOL CHILDREN

Dissertation for the Degree of Master of Science

Foods and Nutrition

By

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Abstract:

This study was conducted to assess the prevalence of malnutrition among school children in a government primary school located in Gandhinagar. A total of 129 children, aged between 5 to 13 years, participated in the study, including 66 boys and 63 girls. The sample was divided into lower primary (86 students) and upper primary (46 students) groups. Parental education levels were found to significantly influence children's nutritional status. Among lower primary students, 80 parents were graduates, 5 had postgraduate education, and 1 had an undergraduate degree. In contrast, most upper primary students' parents were undergraduates (41), with 3 graduates and no postgraduate degree holders.

Anthropometric measurements were recorded for both lower and upper primary students by age and gender. The data for lower primary students revealed that, at age 5, both female and male students were slightly taller than the NCHS standards but had weight measurements lower than the NCHS reference values. As age increased, the height and weight of both girls and boys showed a gradual increase, but weight for females in some age groups (7–10 years) was still slightly lower than the NCHS standard, while boys consistently had measurements close to or slightly above the NCHS standard.

Keywords: Malnutrition, school children, anthropometric measurements, parental education, nutritional status,