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Notice for the PhD Viva-Voce Examination

Ms Veena Shukla (Registration Number: 1850080), PhD scholar at the School of Social Sciences, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bangalore will defend her PhD thesis at the public viva-voce examination on Friday, 31 January 2025 at 2.00 pm in Room No. 044, Ground Floor, R & D Block, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru - 560029.

Title of the Thesis	:	Factors Influencing Nutritional Status of Children in Slums
Discipline	:	Economics
External Examiner (Outside Karnataka)	:	Dr Mukta Singh Associate Professor Department of Home Science Mahila Mahavidyalaya Banaras Hindu University Varanasi Uttar Pradesh - 221005
External Examiner (Within Karnataka)	:	Dr Sangeeta Pandey Associate Professor Department of Food Science & Nutrition Mount Carmel College No 58, Palace Road, Vasanth Nagar Bengaluru Karnataka - 560052
Supervisor	:	Dr Victor Paul Professor Department of Sociology and Social Work School of Social Sciences CHRIST (Deemed to be University) Bengaluru – 560029 Karnataka

The members of the Research Advisory Committee of the Scholar, the faculty members of the Department and the School, interested experts and research scholars of all the branches of research are cordially invited to attend this open viva-voce examination.

Place: Bengaluru
Date: 25 January 2025



Registrar

ABSTRACT

Slums are expanding rapidly, particularly in small and medium-sized towns, despite an overall decline in the slum population. This trend reflects a shift in migration patterns from larger cities to smaller urban areas and highlights the recent development of small and medium towns in terms of employment opportunities and other facilities. In these slum environments, children often face numerous challenges that impact their growth and development. Poor living conditions, limited access to healthcare, and inadequate nutrition contribute to a higher prevalence of malnutrition among slum children, making child nutrition in slums a critical concern. UNICEF regards nutrition as a fundamental human right, as reflected in various human rights conventions. Children, being a vital segment of the population, are deemed as the wealth of any nation, warranting diligent care and attention. Ensuring proper nutrition for these children is essential as it significantly influences their growth, overall quality of life, and serves as a crucial indicator of a nation's economic progress and the effectiveness of its public welfare policies.

This study investigates the factors influencing the nutritional status of slum children aged 6 months to 6 years in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh. It utilizes the socio-ecological model integrated with UNICEF's conceptual framework on child malnutrition. By employing a sequential explanatory mixed-method design and integrating quantitative data from 214 children with qualitative insights from interviews with 24 mothers, it provides a comprehensive understanding of the determinants of child nutrition. This study explores the association of various internal, interpersonal, and environmental factors with the nutritional outcomes of children in a slum setting.

Major findings from the quantitative analysis indicate that child feeding practices, maternal education, socioeconomic status, health-seeking behavior, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) practices were significantly associated with children's nutritional status. The qualitative data provided deeper insights into these associations. Mothers expressed an understanding of the importance of diverse and frequent meals but cited financial constraints and irregular work schedules as barriers to proper feeding practices. The interviews also highlighted existing misbeliefs which impact practices related to child nutrition and health. Furthermore, the qualitative findings emphasized the lack of nutritional awareness among mothers, underscoring their impact on child health and nutrition. In conclusion, the study reveals that improving child nutrition in slum areas requires addressing feeding practices, improving maternal education, reducing socioeconomic disparities, and improving WASH conditions. Nutritional education and awareness emerged as crucial elements during the in-depth interviews, highlighting their importance in improving child health and nutrition. These findings highlight the necessity for integrated interventions aimed at enhancing the nutritional well-being of children living in the slums of Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh.

Keywords: Child nutrition, health, malnutrition, nutritional status, slum children, nutritional education.

Publications:

1. **Veena Shukla, Victor Paul-** Addressing Malnutrition and Micronutrient Deficiencies in Slum Children of India: An Analysis of Government Policies. Third concept, (2023, July), 37(437), 68. ISSN 0970-7247