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### **Epidemiological study on malnutrition among children under five in urban slum of Ludhiana, Punjab, India**

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**Introduction:** Protein energy malnutrition is one of the most important nutritional diseases in developing countries. In any community, under-five children are one of the most vulnerable groups for nutritional deficiencies, owing to many factors ranging from Low Birth Weight to maternal ill health to socio-economic and environmental factors.

**Methodology:** The present study was conducted among children (6-59 months) in the area covered by Urban Health Centre of Department of Community Medicine, Dayanand Medical College and Hospital in Ludhiana of India. A total of 425 children (6-59 months) were covered by house to house visit. Detailed information was collected on a predesigned and pretested performa. Height and weight of each child was assessed by using standard anthropometric methods. The data compilation and analysis was done by using SPSS. The Z-scores for the different nutritional indices; weight-for-age, height-for-age and weight-for-height were calculated in reference to NCHS international reference population.

**Results:** The present study comprised of 425 children, of these 219 (51.5%) were males and 206 (48.5%) were females. Majority of the children (74.8%) were above the age of two years and 25.2% were below two years of age. Prevalence of underweight, stunting and wasting was 29.4%, 49.4% and 62.1% respectively. Prevalence of underweight was more (35.5%) in less than two years old children and wasting and stunting was more in above two years old children but did not show any significant difference. However, prevalence of wasting was more in male infants as compared to females ( $p=0.009$ ). Prevalence of underweight was more in children whose mothers were illiterate and it was statistically significant.

**Conclusion:** More widespread use of z-score system of classification, especially in community based studies is recommended.

#### **Biography**

Sangeeta Girdhar did her MBBS and MD in Community Medicine from Govt. Medical College of Patiala in India. She has participated in various national programmes. She also had her research articles published in National and International Journals. She is also a member of the editorial team in International Journal of Health.

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