

NUTRITIONAL DEFICIENCIES AMONG TRIBAL GUJJAR CHILDREN OF UDHAMPUR DISTRICT OF J&K

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ABSTRACT

The present study was carried out with the objective of analyzing the nutritional status of preschool aged children of Gujjar tribe through the clinical assessment of nutritional deficiencies among them. The entire study was carried out on the semi-nomadic Gujjar tribe residing in Udhampur district of Jammu and Kashmir UT. The sample for the study comprised 150 children in the age group of 3-6 years, and their mothers. The sample was drawn through a combination of random and purposive sampling technique from five villages of Udhampur namely Battal Ballian, Camp area, Kharodiyan, Dhal par and Dhandal. Self-devised interview schedule, observations and clinical signs and symptoms checklist were used for data collection. Findings of the study show that out of the seven indicators of inadequate nutrition majority of the sample children were found to suffer from two namely, diarrhea and mouth problems. Clinical assessment of the children reveals that majority of the sample Gujjar children showed signs of nutritional deficiencies as indicated by the condition of their hair, mouth, nail and skin. Some of the noticeable signs of nutritional deficiencies noted included faded, sparse and thin hair, mouth sore, fissured and swollen tongue, angular stomatitis, dry and rough skin, odema, brittle and spoon shaped nails, white marks on nails, cuticle tear, dark under eye circles, and pale lower eyelids. All these conditions indicate that these children especially suffer from Protein, Vitamin A, Vitamin B and Iron deficiency.

KEYWORDS: *Gujjar Children, J&K, Nutritional Deficiencies, Clinical Symptoms*

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