# Health and Nutritional Status of Primary School Children in Relation to School Performance

Chhetri UD1

1Kanti Children's Hospital, Maharajgunj, Kathmandu, Nepal

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**Background**

Under nutrition and poor health are important underlying factors in low school enrollment, absenteeism, poor class performance and early school dropout. This study was carried out to find out what type of under nutrition and poor health are affecting the primary school children.

**Methods**

Descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out in one government and one private school in Bhaktapur. Questionnaire, focused group discussion, clinical examination and laboratory examination were conducted to collect the data.

**Results**

Prevalence of malnutrition was 6% wasted, 26% underweight, 27% stunned and 7% severe stunted, nearly equally distributed in both sexes. More percentage of children in failed group was stunted (54%), underweight (39%) and severely underweight (2%). Two third of government and half of the private school students were anaemic. Protozoal and helminthic infestation was 53% (government 67% and private school 45%). Parasitic infestation was associated with more of underweight 60%, wasted 38% and least of stunted 19%. Lice was seen in 7%, dandruff 3.2%, earwax 46% and ear discharge 3.4%. failure rate was more in government than in private school. Stunting (26%), underweight (23%) and anaemia (10%) were higher in failed group.

**Conclusions**

Poor school performance was seen in students who were chronic malnourished i.e. stunted, underweight and anaemic. No such relationship was seen with acute malnutrition (wasting), earwax, poor visual acuity and stool parasite with school performance. However the findings were not statistically significant and more study in large population is needed.

**Keywords:** malnutrition; stunting; underweight; wasting.