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# NIU International Journal of Human Rights

A UGC CARE Listed Journal

ISSN : 2394 - 0298

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OF MANIBEN NANAVATI WOMEN'S COLLEGE

*for the paper entitled*

**SERVICE QUALITY OF MCDONALDS IN WESTERN REGIONsw**

*Vol. 8 (IX) - 2021*

*in*

**NIU International Journal of Human Rights**

**UGC Care Group 1**

**ISSN : 2394 - 0298**



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University Grants Commission

Approved Journal  
vol. 51 No. 01(XII)

in

**Anvesak A bi-annual Journal**

**UGC Care Group - 1**

**ISSN : 0378 - 4568**

**January – June 2021**



**A bi-lingual journal**

# *Jijñāsā*

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UGC

University Grants Commission

Approved Journal

Published in Vol. 38, No.05(II) : 2021

**Jijnasa** with ISSN : 0337-743X

UGC Care Approved, Peer Reviewed and Referred Journal



ज्ञान-विज्ञान विमुक्तये

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Volume: 3, Issue: 1

January, 2021

ISSN 2581-8325

# INDIAN JOURNAL OF EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY



**Central Institute of Educational Technology  
National Council of Educational Research & Training**

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## Research Article

# Relationship between Parental Child Safety Measures and Technology Usage Among Children

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## Abstract

*The aim of the study was to find out the level of child safety measures used by parents of 6th - 9th grade children and the level of technology usage among 6th - 9th grade children. It also focused on studying the effect of family earning type on Parental Child Safety Measure. Relationship between technology usage of children and Parental Child Safety Measures was another aspect that was explored. The study was conducted in Mumbai with a sample of 110 Parents of 6th - 9th grade children, using Purposive sampling technique. A self-structured questionnaire with a reliability of 0.78 was used. Parents used moderate level of safety measures with their children. Mostly children used smart phones for less than two hours and especially for the entertainment purpose. The results indicated that dual earner families used more safety measures ( $t=8.57^{**}$ ,  $p=.00$ ) as compared to single earner families. Results also suggested no statistically significant correlation between Child safety measures used by parents and technology usage of children.*

**Keywords:** Child Safety, Child Sexual Abuse, Technology Usage, Awareness, Prevention, Single and Dual Earner Families

## Introduction

Traditional families have changed over time, though men still play an instrumental role in the family, women have shifted from an expressive role to a more instrumental one. The economic system has facilitated this freeing of women from household chores and their entrance to the labour market. Therefore, women's share of the labour force has increased in almost all the countries. Along with this the family structure has changed over time, where more Indian's are moving into nuclear

households. Hence, the world has seen an emergence of dual earner nuclear families.

The world, has not just witnessed a change in family structure, but also the rapid proliferation of information and communications technology (ICT), is an unstoppable force, touching virtually every sphere of modern life and childhood is no exception. With close to 3.5 billion users worldwide, the Internet has become a key public infrastructure that has the potential to connect people (Roser, Ritchie, &

Ortiz-Ospina, 2020). While bringing many benefits to the society and being conducive to innovation, children's learning and development, the fast paced technological innovation and increasing accessibility of ICTs also provide new pathways to sexual abuse and exploitation of Children.

There is evidence that these crimes are continuing to increase and develop in step with technological advances. Changing the behavior of both perpetrators and victims is both challenging and expensive and there is little evidence of what works to reduce these crimes (Quayle, 2020). Online predators now have a wide range of new and easier options for committing serious violations against the rights of the child (UNICEF, 2017).

According to the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), in 2020 1,32,676 uniform resource locators (URLs) contained child sexual abuse material. IWF analysts, in the year 2020, processed about 2,99,600 reports, a 15 percent hike from 2019 (IWF, 2021). Child Sexual Abuse (Hereafter, CSA) is "any completed or attempted (non-completed) sexual act, sexual contact with, or exploitation (i.e., non-contact sexual interaction) of a child by a caregiver, according to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (Murray, Nguyen & Cohen, 2014). When this material is videotaped or picturised, it is called child pornography. The accession, possession, distribution, production, advertisement or making available child pornography or child sexual abuse material; or procuring or grooming a child to engage in sexual activity; or sending indecent communication, is

considered as Online Child Sexual abuse (Capaldi, 2017).

In 2019, 46 percent of the victims of such abuse were 10 years old or younger (IWF Annual Report, 2020). Over the past decade, the role of technology in facilitating sexual offences against children has significantly evolved; as has the world's understanding of sexual offending behaviour and the manifestation of these activities on the Internet (Cybertip, 2016). Although there has been increased attention to victim services, investigation, prosecution, and incarceration, there is a need for all sectors of society to demonstrate an increased commitment to, and investment in, the primary prevention - activities that are directed at the general population and attempt to stop maltreatment before it occurs - of child sexual abuse and exploitation. (National Coalition To Prevent Child Sexual Abuse And Exploitation, 2012).

The universal approaches to primary prevention for child safety include parent education programs and self-help and peer groups, 24 hour crisis care programme (Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota, n.d.). Parents are the immediate family of the child and thus, his/her primary stakeholders and they constitute an important target audience of primary prevention of CSA. Studies have found that parents who participate in prevention programs are more likely to discuss CSA with their children and those discussions are more positive (Rudolph, Zimmer-Gembeck, Shanley, & Hawkins, 2018).

As abuse today, happens on a virtual platform, with realistic harms, the



prevention also needs to be at par. In India, many applications and softwares, aid parents to create a safe environment for the child online, like eKavach, IT Act, 2000 & Cyber Law India and Safe Browser. Also apps like CHIRAG, Shishu Surakhsha and Child Rights Monitor have been launched by various state governments across the country, to safeguard children.

In 2020, CyberTipline received 21751085, an increase of 28 percent from 2019 (National Centre For Missing And Exploited Children, 2020). As per a review conducted by Kloess and colleagues on "Online Child Sexual Exploitation" in 2014 found that Eighty-two percent of young children between the ages of 9 and 11, as well as 95 percent of adolescents between the ages of 12 and 16 have used Internet in Sweden in 2006, of which 32 percent reported to have received online sexual solicitations.

As per the IAMAI & Kantar IMRB survey as on December 2016, the overall internet penetration in India was around 31 percent presently. Analysis of 'Daily Users' revealed that both in Urban and Rural India, the younger generations were the most prolific users of internet. As per a more recent report India has 504 million active internet users and of the total internet population 71 million were between 5-11 years of age (Livemint, 2020).

### Rationale

The world in the past few decades has witnessed digitalization; however, the anonymity of the internet has led to its own share of adverse effects. It helps its

users to have a wider reach, and thus the abusers have moved to an online platform, to share images and videos of CSA and also groom children online. As internet usage amongst the youth is experiencing a sharp growth, they have become more vulnerable to online CSA. It thus becomes important for parents to take due measures to safeguard children online. The traditional roles of women have also shifted, thus leading to the emergence of dual earner families. Therefore, the study focused on exploring the parental child safety measures against online CSA with respect to family earning type and also the its relationship with technology usage of children.

### Objectives

1. To find out the level of Parental Child Safety Measures of 6th to 9th grade children
2. To know the usage of technology among 6th to 9th grade children
3. To find out the effect of family earning type on Parental Child Safety Measures for CSA with use of technology
4. To observe the relationship between Parental Child Safety Measures for CSA and technology usage among children

### Hypothesis

H01: There is no statistically significant difference between the level of Parental Child Safety Measures with respect to single and dual earner families

H02: There is no statistically significant correlation between Parental Child

Safety Measures and technology usage of children

## Methodology

### Operational Definitions

**Parental Child Safety Measures:** The strategies parents use to safeguard children against online child sexual abuse.

**Single Earner Families:** The families in which only one partner is earning.

**Dual Earner Families:** The families in which both the partners are earning.

**Children:** Children who are studying in 6th to 9th Grade

**Technology Usage of Children:** Reported time of technology usage by children, per day. Like access to smart phones, tablets and computers etc.

### Sampling procedure

The study was conducted in Western Suburbs of Mumbai. A self-devised questionnaire was administered to 110 parents of 6th -9th grade children using purposive sampling technique.

### Tool

A self-structured questionnaire with a reliability of 0.78 was used to assess the Parental Child Safety Measures and the technology usage of 6th -9th grade children. It was validated by three experts from the field of Child Sexual Abuse and who had research experience.

### Data analysis

Data was analyzed using a statistical software. Statistics such as percentage,

Mean, Standard Deviation, independent samples t-test and Bi-variate correlation (Pearson's correlation) were used to analyze the data and draw inferences.

## Results and Discussions

### Demographics of the participants

The average age of the children in the sample was 12.8 years. Majority, i.e. 73.63 percent & 53.63 percent of the mothers and fathers respectively belonged to the age group of 35-45 years. Majorly (36.36 percent) monthly income of the sample was above 75,000 rupees. Most i.e. 37.27 percent & 36.36 percent, of the fathers and mothers, in the study were graduates, respectively. Almost half (50.90 percent) of the participants were belonged to nuclear families. More than half of the families were single earners i.e. 54.5 percent, whereas 45.4 percent were dual earners.

### Parental Child Safety Measures

Figure-1 suggests that majority of the parents used moderate level of child safety measures to prevent online child sexual abuse i.e. 66 percent of them. A review by Wurtele and Kenny (2010) stated that number of studies have been conducted which showed that parents tried to educate their children about Child Sexual Abuse.



Figure 1: Percentage of the Level of Parental Child Safety Measures

Yet another review by Rudolph (1027) and colleagues stated that two studies have focused on parental protective behaviours, other than communicating with children directly about CSA risks. These two studies demonstrate that parents use a variety of protective

practices (e.g., supervision, monitoring, and involvement) to create the external barriers that may keep their children safe from CSA, of which direct discussions of abuse prevention in the home are only a small part.

**Level of Technology Usage**

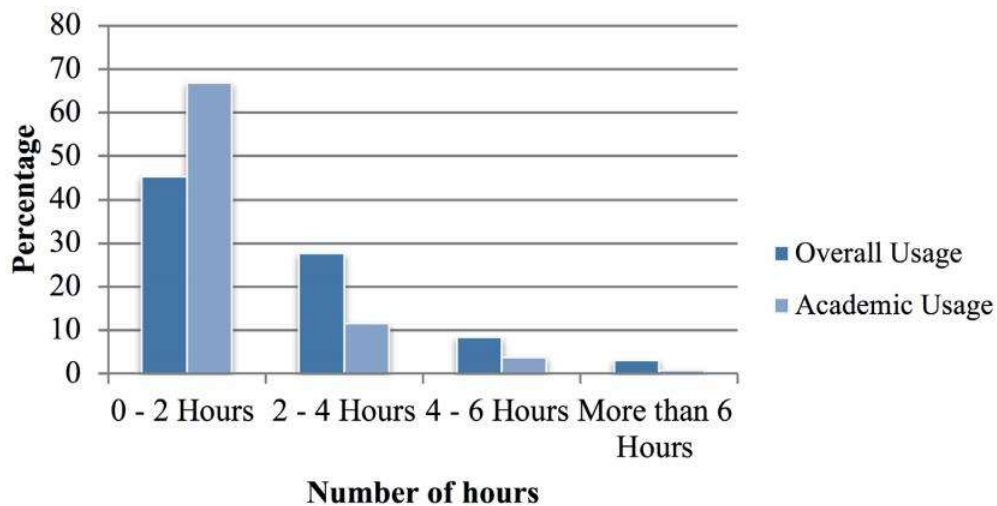
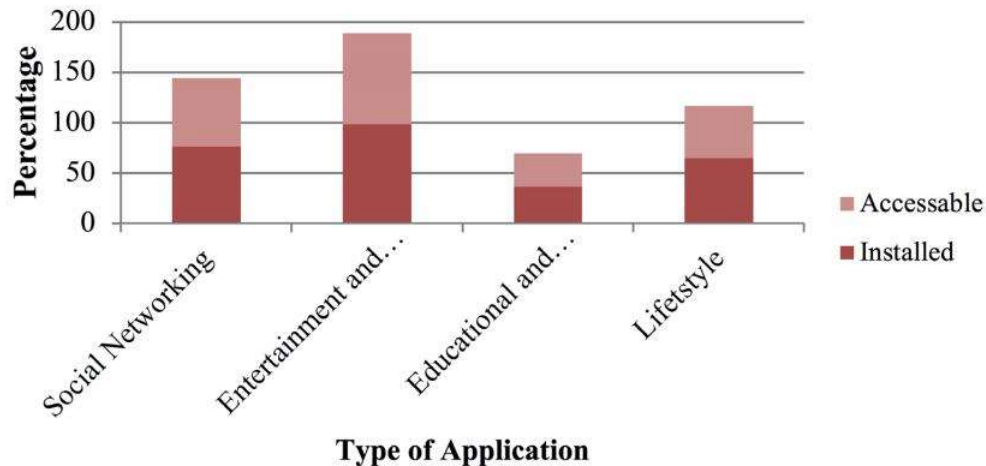


Figure 2: Percentage of children using smart phones for academic and other purposes per day (in hours)

Figure-2 suggests that most children used smart phones for less than 2 hours. More academic usage was seen for less than 2 hours, whereas overall usage was dominant between 2-6 hours. A study conducted at the Aligarh

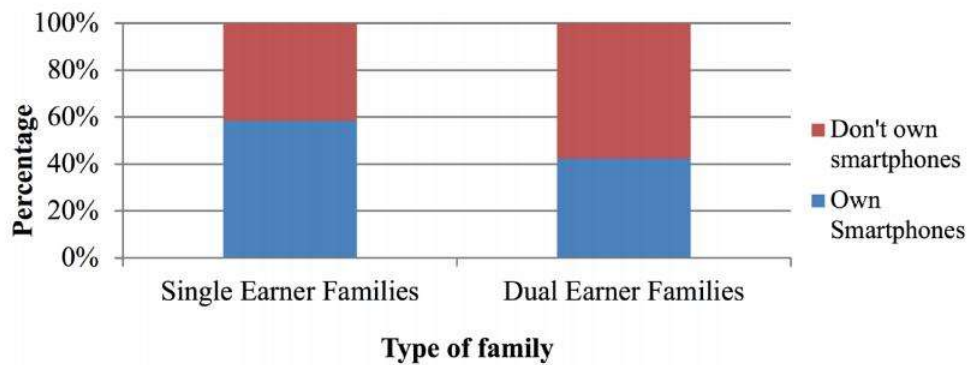
Muslim University, on college students, showed that 63 percent respondents used their phones for 4-7 hours daily, thus supporting the current findings (Agha, 2018).



**Figure 3: Percentage of children having various types of applications openly installed and accessible in their smart phones**

Figure-3 suggests that most children had entertainment applications both installed as well as openly accessible, followed by social networking applications, followed by lifestyle apps.

The least used applications were the educational applications. However, the difference between the application in terms of being installed and accessible wasn't stark.



**Figure 4: Percentage of ownership of smart phones among children of single and dual earner families**

However, Figure-4 suggests that more than 50 percent children owned smart phones in single earner families, whereas only 42 percent children in dual

earner families owned smart phones. This might be due to less availability of the parents at home most of the time in dual earner families. Also many a

times parents use too much of digital tool to manage time with their children right from the early years, which is also reflected in the study done by Kabali et al (2015), who stated that 70 percent of parents gave children digital devices when doing house chores, 65 percent to keep the child calm in public places, 58 percent to keep their child occupied while they ran errands and 28 percent parents used mobile devices to put their child to sleep during early years.

**Table-1: Mean, SD and t-value of Parental Child Safety Measures with Respect to Working Status of the Family**

Working Status	N	Mean	SD	t value	Level of Significance
Single Earner	84	32.59	5.49	8.57**	.00
Dual Earner	26	36.00	3.98		

\*\*Significance at  $p < .00$  level

Table-1 suggests that there was a statistically significant difference in parental child safety measures with respect to family earning type. Thus, null hypothesis has been rejected. The mean difference suggested that dual earner families use more child safety measures, to safeguard their children against online CSA, as compared to single earners. Although, figure 4 depicted that more smart phones were owned by children in single earner families, single earner families used less safety measures. The reason for the same might be the dual earner parents are exposed more to the changing world. A study conducted by Preethy and Somasundaram in 2020 found that Majority of the working parents were aware of the various factors that could result in child abuse and nearly half of them had taken proper steps to prevent such untoward occurrence in their families. Another study conducted by Alzoubi, Ali, Flah & Al-Natour in 2017 found that employed mothers had a higher awareness of CSA and recognized signs and symptoms of CSA more than other mothers. The higher awareness and unavailability both could possibly put them more on guard as they are not able to supervise the child all the time.

**Table-2: Pearson Correlation Coefficient and p-value between Parental Child Safety Measures and Technology usage by 6<sup>th</sup> -9<sup>th</sup> grade children**

	Parental Child Safety	Technology Usage
Parental Child Safety	1	-.02
Technology Usage	-.02	1

\*Significant at  $p < .05$  level

Table-2 suggests that there was no statistically significant relationship between parental child safety measures and technology usage. There was a very weak negative correlation which suggests that as parental child safety measures increases, the technology usage of children decreases. Thus, the proposed null hypothesis had been accepted. As seen in figure-2, children spent more time using smart phones, for purposes other than academic and as indicated in figure 3, there wasn't much difference between the mobile applications being installed and the ones being accessible by children, which suggests that parental controls might not be as stringent, and thus didn't increase with increasing usage of technology. The findings of a research by Shin and Li, in 2017, suggested that parental mediation was not a function of the time spent by children on digital technology, thus supporting the current study. It alternatively, suggested that parental engagement in digital activities might be related to the mediation they provide, as they then understand the potential hazards of technology usage along with the barriers that they might face.

### **Conclusion**

The current study suggested that most parents used only moderate level of child safety measures. The children in the current study had more overall technology usage i.e. for entertainment and social purposes, as compared to academic usage. The second highest

applications accessible to children were those of social media. The results also suggested that there was no significant correlation between technology usage of children and parental child safety measures. However, it was found that dual earner families used more parental child safety measures, as compared to single earners.

### **Limitations**

The Sample size and inclusion criteria in the study, limits the ability to generalize the research findings. More importantly, as all the participants lived in Mumbai, the results had geographical limitations. Moreover, there can be a possibility of gender bias as majority of participants were females. The technology usage of children has been reported by parents, however, in dual earner families, parents might not be able to supervise their children's screen time, all day, which might lead to inaccurate reporting.

### **Recommendation**

A larger representative sample with equal number of male and female participants would be suggested for a further research in order to make generalization possible and minimize gender bias. Also, participants from various socio economic backgrounds must be considered. Semi structured interviews and other qualitative data must be considered to justify the results. Inclusion of parental engagement with technology and the data about child's technology usage must be collected from the child as a self-report.

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Vol. 13 No. 5, July 2020

ISSN : 0975-1386

# Wesleyan Journal of Research

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***Wesleyan Journal of Research***  
Vol. 13 No. 5, July 2020.

Published by  
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West Bengal, India,  
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Printed at :  
A. T. Press,  
Bankura, India

(This is a refereed journal and all articles are professionally screened and reviewed. The articles reflect the opinion/views of the authors. The editorial board is in no way responsible for the same)

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## Loneliness, Self-Esteem and Anxiety in Adolescents with Specific Learning Disabilities

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study was to examine the levels of anxiety, loneliness and self-esteem in adolescents with Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) as compared to their non-learning disabled peers. The sample consisted of 80 participants, comprising those diagnosed with SLD (N=40) and those without SLD (N=40) aged between 13-18 years, taken from schools and a college based in Mumbai, India. The tools used were the Beck Anxiety Inventory (1988), the Rosenberg Self-esteem Scale (1965) and the UCLA Loneliness Scale- Version 3 (1996). The Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was conducted to analyse the difference in the levels of anxiety, loneliness and self-esteem in the two groups of adolescents. Results indicated that the level of anxiety in adolescents with SLD was significantly higher  $F(1, 78) = 14.101, p < .01$ . The level of loneliness in adolescents with SLD was significantly higher  $F(1, 78) = 21.644, p < .01$ . Results of self-esteem would be lower in adolescents with SLD was found to be non-significant  $F(1, 78) = 1.983, p < 0.163$ .

**Key Words:** Specific Learning Disabilities, Anxiety, Loneliness, Self-Esteem.

### Article History

Received: 21/06/2020; Accepted: 30/07/2020

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### Introduction

Children with Specific Learning Disabilities are more often than not, bullied and mocked by their peers. A Specific Learning Disorder (SLD) is a delay or deficit in an academic skill that is evident when an individual's achievement and skills are substantially below what would be expected for others of comparable age, education, and level of intelligence. (Whitbourne & Halgin, 2014). According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth

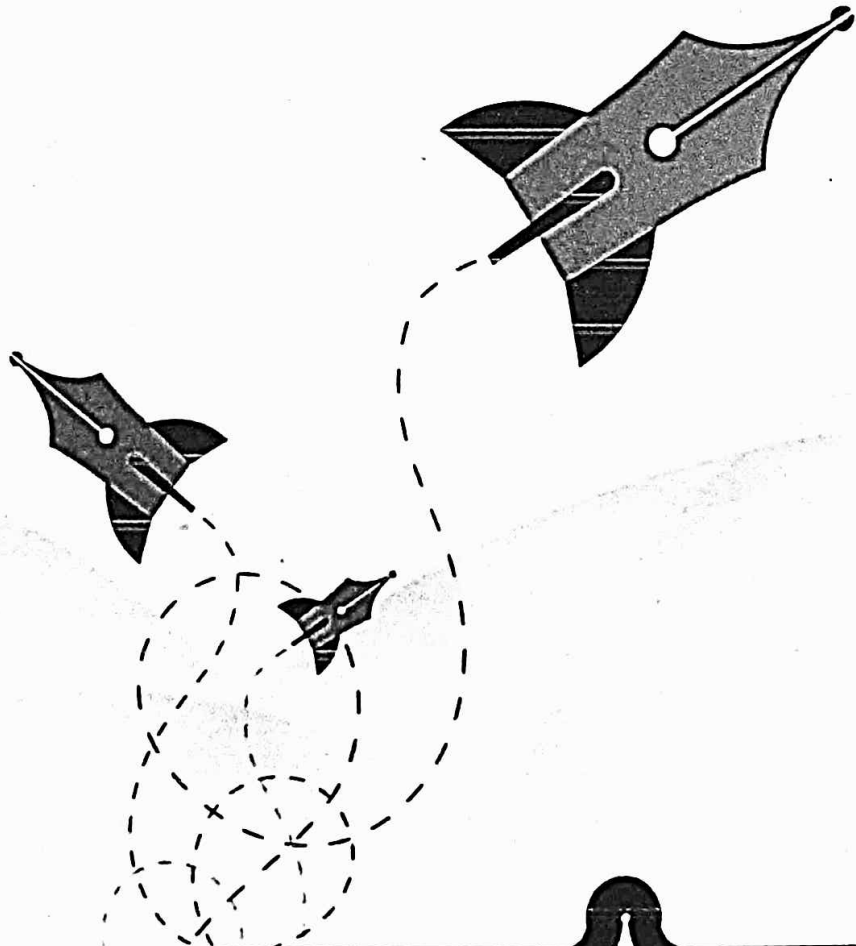
# शरध सारिता

An International Multidisciplinary Quarterly  
Bilingual Peer Reviewed Refereed Research Journal

• Vol. 7

• Issue 26 (V)

• April to June 2020



Editor in Chief

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# Shodh Sarita

AN INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY QUARTERLY BILINGUAL  
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• Vol. 7

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## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON WOMEN DURING COVID-19

Dr. Twinkle Sanghavi\*

### ABSTRACT

The study stresses on the obligatory repercussions that followed the lockdown which was imposed on several countries including India, due to the outbreak of Covid-19. Media and administrative officials focused on improving the obvious issues that caused sudden disruption in the nation's mechanism but failed to notice the vulnerable quandaries that equally developed during this time. The age-old patriarchal society has given redundant powers to men. In spite of the substantial transformation in the mindset of the present generation, there are people who visualize women as a subject of objectification. There were numerous instances of domestic violence practiced on women amidst the pandemic. During a time when everything is done from home and all the members are stuck together, there has been an unparalleled rise in brutality against women. This study is empirical in nature in which primary data from 73 females was collected. It was found that domestic violence has increased during Covid times and financial crisis is a major reason of it. The women were found aware about the domestic violence. The study has identified various types of domestic violence and from whom they seek help if they are the victim of domestic violence.

**Keywords :** Lockdown, Covid-19, India, women, domestic violence

### Introduction

The sudden eruption of the virulent disease; Corona virus has entrapped the entire world in its shackles, causing discrepancy socially, culturally and economically. The cases of Covid-19 in India have crossed the 15 lakhs mark whereas 1.5 crore people are affected throughout the world. The practice of social isolation, travel restrictions, quarantines and stay-at-home orders have become the rule of life. In the absence of a proper medical treatment, these are the most favorable steps every nation has adopted; however, its profound psychological impact is another area of discussion. The effect of isolation can deteriorate susceptibilities due to the dearth of a recognized societal order. The provisional closure of dispensable businesses led to the increase in joblessness and financial tension (Punty, 2020). The situation of quarantine is related to abuse, despair, and delayed-stress symptoms.

Staying indoors for so long without any recreational interference of the outside world can create an appalling ambience for the ones whose lives are inundated by domestic violence. Domestic violence can only take place in a home setting where an individual dominates over others. It is a broad term that also includes abuse like intimate partner violence (IPV), elder abuse and also ill-treatment done to children. [ However, more cases of domestic violence are related to sexual abuse in the present situation. According to UN (2020), around 1 of women and 1 out of 10 men have been a victim to the form of violence. The statistics of domestic violence were seen to be high since the dawn of Covid-19 and according to a report published by China; the numbers have tripled in the duration of a year. As per the facts provided by United Nations, the effect of violence since March has gone up by 30% in France and 25% in Argentina. There has been an elevation of 30% in helpline calls in Cy



Vol. 13 No. 5, July 2020

ISSN : 0975-1386

# Wesleyan Journal of Research

An International Research Journal

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES

Multidisciplinary | Peer Reviewed | Refereed

UGC Care Listed



Bankura Christian College  
Bankura-722101  
WEST BENGAL, INDIA

***Wesleyan Journal of Research***

Vol. 13 No. 5, July 2020.

Published by

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Bankura - 722101

West Bengal, India,

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Printed at :

A. T. Press,

Bankura, India

(This is a refereed journal and all articles are professionally screened and reviewed. The articles reflect the opinion/views of the authors. The editorial board is in no way responsible for the same)

# Wesleyan Journal of Research

Vol. 13 No. 5 July 2020 (ISSN: 0975-1386) | Impact  
2020  
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## Relationship between Internet Addiction, Loneliness, Quality of Sleep and Quality of Life among young adults in Mumbai

Naushi Chokhani<sup>1</sup> and Anuja Deshpande<sup>2</sup>

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**Abstract:** The present study was to investigate how Internet addiction impacts loneliness, quality of sleep and quality of life among young adults in Mumbai. The research design was a correlational study. Self-report survey data were collected from 275 young adults between the ages 18-25 years. To measure the variables, scales such as Young's Internet Addiction Scale (IAT) by Kimberly Young (1998), Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index by Buysse, Reynolds, Monk, Berman and Kupfer (1989), UCLA Loneliness scale by University of California, Los Angeles. Published by Russell, Peplau and Ferguson (1978) and World Health Organization Quality Of Life – BREF by World Health Organization (1994) were used. Results found indicated that Internet addiction showed positive correlation with loneliness with the  $r$  value was 0.190 which was significant at 0.01 level, i.e. ( $r=0.190, p<.01$ ). Internet addiction showed negative correlation with Quality of life with the  $r$  value was -0.343 which was significant at 0.01 level, i.e. ( $r=-0.343, p<.01$ ). Internet addiction showed significant positive correlation with Quality of sleep with the  $r$  value was 0.323 which was significant at 0.01 level, i.e. ( $r= .323, p<.01$ ). Thus, the results revealed that Internet addiction had an association with loneliness, quality of sleep and quality of life. Regression analysis showed that Internet addiction could be used to predict loneliness, quality of life and quality of sleep among young adults.

**Key Words:** Internet Addiction, Loneliness, Quality of Sleep, Quality of Life.

### Article History

Received: 21/06/2020; Accepted: 30/07/2020

Corresponding author: Naushi Chokhani, Email id: naushichokhani@yahoo.com

### Introduction

UGC APPROVED  
CARE LISTED JOURNAL

ISSN 2229-3620

GOVT. OF INDIA RNI NO. - UPBIL/2015/62096



# शोध संचार बुलेटिन

SIA

AN INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY QUARTERLY BILINGUAL  
PEER REVIEWED REFEREED RESEARCH JOURNAL

★ Vol. 10

★ Issue 39

★ July to September 2020

*Editor in Chief*

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UGC APPROVED  
CARE LISTED JOURNAL  
GOVT. OF INDIA RNI NO. - UPBIL/2015/62096

ISSN No. 2229-3620



# SHODH SANCHAR

## Bulletin

AN INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY QUARTERLY BILINGUAL  
PEER REVIEWED REFEREED RESEARCH JOURNAL

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Sanchar Educational & Research Foundation, Lucknow (U.P.) INDIA

## **PRINTER**

Aradhya Prakashan, 448 /119/76  
Kalyanpuri Thakurganj, Chowk, Lucknow-226003 U.P.

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### **Publisher, Printer & Editor :-**

Dr. Vinay Kumar Sharma Published at 448 /119/76 ,Kalyanpuri Thakurganj, Chowk, Lucknow-226003 U.P.  
and printed by Aradhya Prakashan, 448 /119/76, Kalyanpuri Thakurganj, Chowk, Lucknow-226003 U.P.

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□ प्रा. गीता वरुण\*

### शोध सारांश

21 वीं सदी को मास मीडिया की सदी माना जाता है क्योंकि मास मीडिया का प्रभाव हर क्षेत्र में फैला हुआ है। पूरी दुनिया कलम की ताकत से वाकिफ है। नेपोलियन सहित शक्तिशाली गणमान्य व्यक्तियों ने कलम की शक्ति का स्वीकार किया है। जमाना बदल गया है, फिर भी कलम का महत्व दुनिया द्वारा सहज रूप से स्वीकार किया जा रहा है। इन्फॉर्मेशन टेक्नोलॉजी के इस युग में, दुनिया भर के मीडिया दर्शक-पाठक को जानकारी प्रदान करने के लिए उत्सुक हैं। मानव जीवन में पत्रकारिता का बहुत महत्व है। भले ही हम इंटरनेट पर क्लिक करके दुनिया भर से जानकारी प्राप्त करते हैं, लेकिन कोई भी माध्यम, समाचार पत्रों की यात्रा को रोकने में सक्षम नहीं है। देश के एक कोने से दूसरे कोने में हो रही हलचल से भारत का प्रत्येक नागरिक जुड़ा है। इस जुड़ाव के अनेक माध्यम हैं, सिनेमा जगत, सोशल मीडिया, पर्यटन, आकाशवाणी, पत्रकारिता आदि। इनमें पत्रकारिता की भूमिका महत्वपूर्ण है। क्योंकि पत्रकारिता समाज के विचारों और साहित्य की संवाहिका है जो समाज और साहित्य के इतिहास में अपना महत्वपूर्ण स्थान रखती है। उसे प्रतिष्ठित करने के साथ ही साथ साहित्य और इतिहास का निर्माण भी करती है। वर्तमान जीवन के बहुआयामी विस्तार और विकास से सुपरिचित होने के लिए पत्रकारिता अपरिहार्य है। पत्रकारिता के द्वारा देश एवं समाज की सेवा की जा सकती है। सबसे पहले वर्तमान में पत्रकारिता की स्थिति को समझना होगा। पत्रकारिता कितना महत्वपूर्ण है। किस तरह से सत्य का उद्घाटन किया जा सकता है, समस्या का समाधान प्रस्तुत किया जा सकता है। साहित्य और पत्रकारिता दो विपरीत गतिविधियाँ हैं। पत्रकारिता एक ऐसा जन माध्यम है कि उसके साथ साहित्य का संबंध अप्रत्यक्ष नहीं होता। मेरा उद्देश्य यह चर्चा करना है कि साहित्य और पत्रकारिता एक दूसरे के पूरक कैसे हैं, विभिन्न साहित्यिक गतिविधियाँ, प्रतिलेखन, प्रकाशन के प्रश्न आदि का साहित्यिक पत्रकारिता से किस तरह संबंधित हैं। इस शोध पत्र में उक्त बिन्दुओं पर अपने विचार व्यक्त करने का उपक्रम है।

**Keywords:** मीडिया, पत्रकारिता, साहित्य, समूह माध्यम

#### प्रस्तावना

आज विश्व के एक कोने से दूसरे कोने तक हो रही हलचल से प्रत्येक मनुष्य जुड़ा है। इस जुड़ाव के अनेक माध्यम हैं – पर्यटन, सिनेमा जगत, सोशल मीडिया, रेडियो, पत्रकारिता आदि। इनमें पत्रकारिता की भूमिका महत्वपूर्ण है क्योंकि पत्रकारिता समाज के विचारों और साहित्य की संवाहिका है। जो समाज और साहित्य के इतिहास में अपना महत्वपूर्ण स्थान रखती है। उसे प्रतिष्ठित करने के साथ ही साथ साहित्य और इतिहास का निर्माण भी करती है। वर्तमान जीवन के बहुआयामी विस्तार और विकास से सुपरिचित होने के लिए पत्रकारिता अपरिहार्य है।

डॉ. भंवर सुराणा के कथानुसार, "पत्रकारिता वह धर्म है, जिसका संबंध पत्रकार के उस कर्म से है जिससे वह तात्कालीनी घटनाओं और समस्याओं का सबसे अधिक सही और निष्पक्ष विवरण पाठकों के सम्मुख प्रस्तुत करे तथा जनमत संग्रह करने

का श्रम भी करें।"<sup>1</sup>

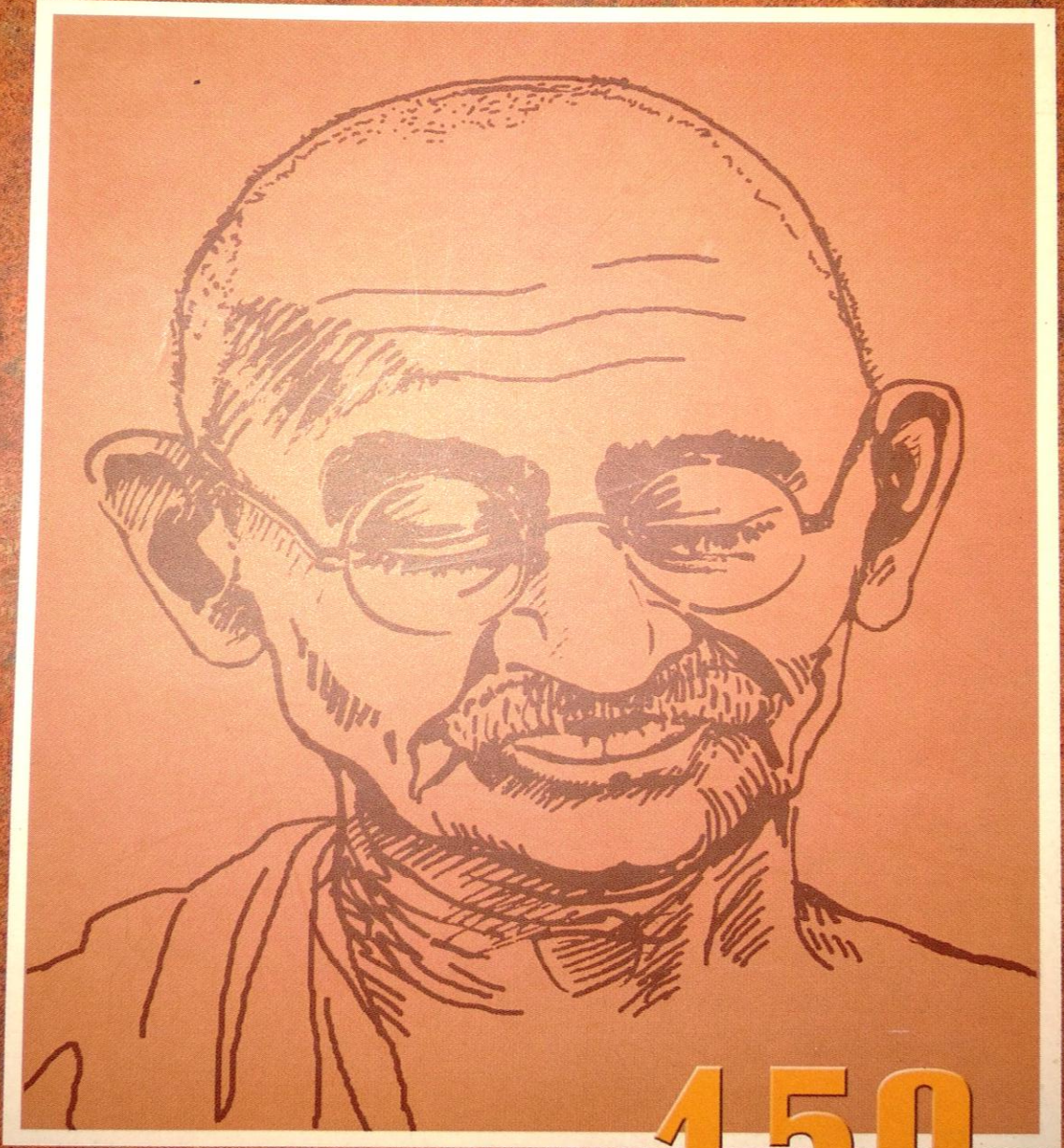
साहित्यिक पत्रकारिता का जन्म पत्रकारिता और साहित्य के उदात्त संगम से हुआ है। समाचार पत्र, साहित्य के योग कर रहे हैं। पत्रकारिता और साहित्य के संयोजन से साहित्य की सेवा तो हुई ही है लेकिन पत्रकारिता भी समृद्ध हुई है। अखबारों ने साहित्यिक पत्रकारिता के माध्यम से लोगों की पढ़ने की भूख को संतुष्ट करने, उनके साहित्यिक स्वाद को पूरा करने के साथ-साथ जनता के सांस्कृतिक गठन और मानवीय मूल्यों की स्थापना में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाई है।

पूना से प्रकाशित हिंदी शब्द सूची के अनुसार, हिंदी शब्द भंडार में, पत्र – पत्रिकाओं के योगदान को महत्वपूर्ण माना गया है। इस सर्वेक्षण के अनुसार अनुवाद, बाल साहित्य, महिला साहित्य तथा रेडियो वार्ताओं से 14210 शब्द, वैज्ञानिक तथा गंभीर साहित्य से 15340 शब्द, सरल साहित्य से 23153 शब्द

\*मणिबेन नानावटी विमेन्स कॉलेज, विले पार्ले, महाराष्ट्र, भारत

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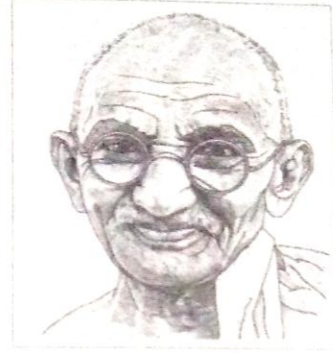
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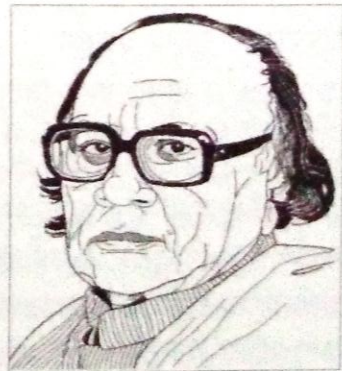
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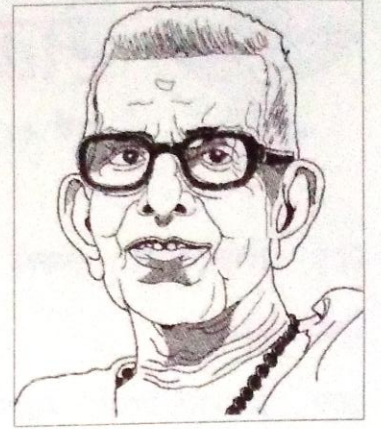
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## विस्मृत स्त्री इतिहास की तलाश

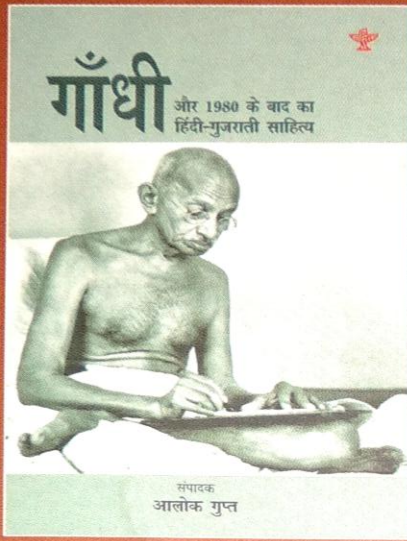
इतिहास के किसी काल खंड को उठाकर उपन्यास लिखने का अर्थ सिर्फ घटनाओं का वर्णन भर नहीं, बल्कि तथ्यों और घटनाओं की पहचान कर सही विश्लेषण के द्वारा उन निष्कर्षों पर पहुँचना भी होता है, जो इतिहास का हिस्सा बनते हैं। 'बेगम समरू का सच' राजगोपाल सिंह वर्मा द्वारा लिखित सरधना की बेगम समरू के जीवन का आख्यान है जो ऐतिहासिक तथ्यों के साथ पूरी ईमानदारी, गहन अनुसंधान और तटस्थ पड़ताल के बाद लिखा गया है। भारतीय इतिहास में चाँद बीबी, लक्ष्मी बाई, कर्णावती, अहिल्याबाई, रज़िया सुल्तान, बेगम समरू आदि कुछ गिनी-चुनी स्त्रियों के नाम ही हैं जिन्हें हम जानते हैं, लेकिन इनके बारे में भी हम कितना जानते हैं। बेगम समरू उर्फ़ फ़रजाना जेबुनिसा उर्फ़ जोहाना नोबालिस के बारे में तो हम लगभग न के बराबर जानते हैं, जबकि बेगम समरू ने भारत के इतिहास में न सिर्फ़ अन्य रानियों से ज़्यादा समय तक राज किया, बल्कि बहुत बेहतर और प्रभावी तरीके से किया।

लेखक ने एक कुशल प्रशासक के रूप में बेगम समरू के विषय में प्रचलित सभी किंवदंतियों का खंडन करते हुए उनके योगदान का प्रामाणिक आकलन किया है। बेगम समरू इतिहास के विस्मृत पृष्ठों में छिपी हुई वह असाधारण प्रतिभा है, जिसके बारे में ज्यादातर इतिहासकार लगभग मौन हैं या फिर उसे सिर्फ़ एक नाचने-गाने वाली स्त्री के रूप में दिखाकर चुप्पी लगा ली। मुगल इतिहासकारों ने दिल्ली और उसके आसपास के शासकों के उत्थान और पतन पर खूब लिखा है, अंग्रेज़ों द्वारा राज्य हड़पने की नीति पर भी कम नहीं लिखा गया, लेकिन आश्चर्य है कि जिस समरू बेगम ने दो बार दिल्ली के बादशाह की गद्दी बचाई, और उसे फिर से गद्दी पर बैठाया, उसके बारे में लिखना उन्हें ज़रूरी नहीं लगा।

'बेगम समरू का सच' (संवाद प्रकाशन, मेरठ) में सबाल्टर्न यानी हाशिये की एक ऐसी स्त्री के जीवन के ऐतिहासिक तथ्यों को रेखांकित किया गया है, जिसके जीवन की शुरुआत दिल्ली की सड़कों पर दर-दर की ठोकें खाने से हुई। रहने को घर नहीं, खाने को अन्न नहीं, भीख में जो मिला, खाकर सड़क के किनारे पड़ी रही अपनी माँ के साथ। फिर एक नाचने वाली गुलबदन बेगम के कोठे पर शरण मिली, जहाँ उसने कथक तथा संगीत की शिक्षा ली और अपने नृत्य से लोगों का मन बहलाने लगी। अद्भुत प्रतिभा थी उस छोटी सी लड़की में। फ़ारसी और उर्दू की विशुद्ध जानकार, कथक नृत्य और गायन में कुशल फ़रज़ाना पर नज़र पड़ी उस जर्मन मर्सीनरी सैनिक वॉल्टर रेन्हार्ट सोब्रे उर्फ़ समरू साहब की, जो उससे करीब 26 साल बड़ा था। पहली मुलाकात में ही समरू साहब ने फ़रज़ाना को अपना दिल दे दिया और सन् 1767 में उससे शादी करके अपने साथ ले गए। कुछ दिनों में ही रेन्हार्ट सोम्ब्रे दिल्ली के बादशाह शाह आलम के लिए लड़ने लगे। उन्होंने रोहिला सरदार जाबिता

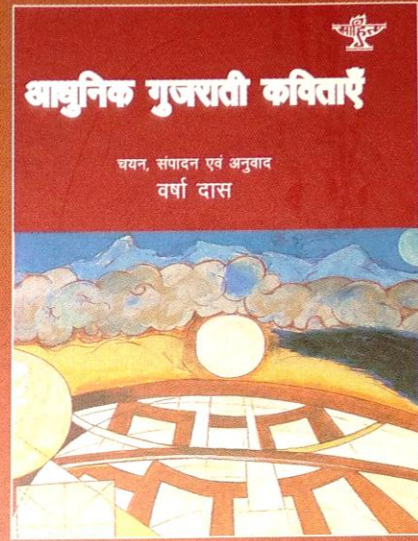


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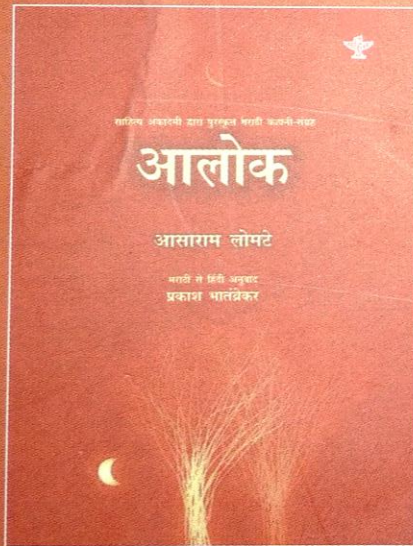
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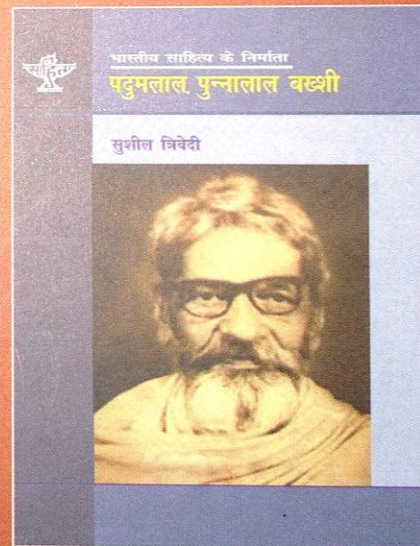
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ISSN 0970-8367



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# Diet diversity of urban households in India during the COVID-19 lockdown

Nutrition and Health

1–7

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DOI: 10.1177/02601060211019676

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## Abstract

**Background:** The nature of the COVID-19 pandemic forced several nations to impose country-wide lockdowns. The lockdown impacted several aspects of life including the economy. Food security became a growing concern for many households. **Aim:** The aim of the study was to explore the diet diversity of urban households in India during the nationwide COVID-19 lockdown. **Methods:** Information regarding socioeconomic status (SES), family size and information regarding availability and access to food were gathered from 450 households. Diet diversity was assessed using a 69-item food frequency questionnaire. Food variety scores (FVS) were computed for individual food groups and overall. **Results:** The majority of the households (86.4%) belonged to the upper-middle or upper SES. Households did not experience any constraints in accessibility and availability of food except the meat group. Overall, 84% of the households had low FVS for most of the food groups except for sugar and milk and milk products. The household SES score was positively associated with the milk FVS ( $B = 0.039$ ,  $p = 0.020$ ) and negatively with the fat FVS ( $B = -0.062$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The number of adults ( $B = 6.773$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) in the household positively predicted the FVS of cereal, vegetable, fruit, fat and total FVS. **Conclusions:** The higher SES households in urban India did not experience food insecurity. Despite this, their poor diet diversity is a serious cause for concern, especially in the wake of the evolving pandemic. This highlights the need to promote consumption of a diverse variety of foods.

## Keywords

Food Variety Score, diet diversity, lockdown, COVID-19, pandemic

## Introduction

In January 2020, the outbreak of the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2) was confirmed (World Health Organization, 2019). Soon after, several countries reported cases of SARS-CoV-2. In India, the first case was reported on 30 January 2020. After the initial few cases, a surge in reported cases began in early March 2020. The Government of India took cognizance of the situation and imposed a nationwide lockdown from 25 March 2020, which was extended until 31 May 2020. After this, the government brought in a few zone-wise relaxations while the lockdown continued in the containment areas.

The lockdown period witnessed a number of changes. COVID-19 not only emerged as a public health crisis but also impacted the different economic sectors. Travel and tourism, hospitality, manufacturing and transportation were adversely affected (Saraswathy, 2020). The micro, small and medium enterprises were affected the most (Rakshit and Basistha, 2020). Migrant labourers were hit the worst, with no wages, no food and no means to travel back to their home towns. On the other hand, the workforce from the

service sector such as IT firms moved to a work-from-home mode of working. To bear the economic crisis, many large companies started to lay off their employees (Ray, 2020).

With the economic crisis, food security became a cause for concern. The lockdown impacted the agri-food supply chain (ETGovernment, 2020). During this period, only essential services such as groceries, pharmacy and emergency medical services were available. Consumers were anxious about the availability, quality and prices of the fresh foods and food products. This led to some consumers purchasing huge stocks of foods. On the other hand, the government also made efforts to step up the public

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distribution system to ensure food availability to the poorer sections of the population (Pathak et al., 2020).

Studies in Kenya, Uganda, Bangladesh and Iran reported a rise in food insecurity during the lockdown period (Kansiime et al., 2021; Kundu et al., 2021; Pakravan-Charvadeh, et al., 2021a, 2021b). In India too, with the rising cases and the extended lockdown, the household food purchasing power, food choices and, therefore, the diet diversity seem to have been affected (Headey and Ruel, 2020). Dietary diversity is an effective tool to assess the diet quality in an emergency situation where resources are limited. At the household level, diet diversity is a reflection of the economic ability to access food (Kennedy et al., 2011). Household food variety scores (FVS) are an extension of household diet diversity which give a glimpse of the variety of foods that the household has access to (Badari et al., 2012).

In view of the above-mentioned concerns, we undertook the present study with an aim to assess the diet diversity of urban Indian households during the lockdown period. The specific research questions that we explored were (a) did the lockdown affect the food access and availability?; (b) was food availability associated with diet diversity?; and (c) did the socioeconomic status (SES) of the household predict the diet diversity?

## Methods

**Study design:** It was a cross-sectional study conducted in the urban areas of India during April–June 2020, when the lockdown was in place in most parts of the country.

**Sample selection and size:** Four hundred and fifty households across Indian cities such as Mumbai, Pune, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, Delhi and Kolkata participated in the study via convenience sampling technique. The households were selected based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria: households in the jurisdiction of urban areas/cities were included. Quarantined households were eligible to participate in the study post their quarantine period. During the quarantine period, food access could have been affected due to restrictions in movement. Therefore, such households were eligible to participate post their quarantine. Households with at least one person having access to the internet (via smartphones or other devices) and who was able to read and write English language were eligible to participate in the study. Individuals or families residing in hostels, community-living centres, institutional homes and migrant camps were excluded from the study.

**Data collection:** During the lockdown and with measures of social distancing in place, collecting data on a one-to-one basis was not feasible. Thus, the electronic forms were created on Google. These were electronically shared with the eligible participants via email and social media (Facebook, WhatsApp and LinkedIn). The participants were informed about the objectives of the study, the nature of information required, confidentiality of the data and the

average time required to complete the survey. The privacy of the data was ensured by access being only with the authors. The information sheet was shared with the participants and electronic consent was obtained from them.

## Measurements

**Diet diversity** – Diet diversity of the households was assessed using FVS. FVS is a reflection of the diet quality and the diversity of the diet (Choi and Bae, 2014; Evans et al., 2018; Sonandi et al., 2017). We assessed the FVS of the household using a 69-item food frequency questionnaire. FVS was defined as the number of different food items eaten in a week during the lockdown period. The FVS of the households was calculated for commonly eaten foods listed in nine groups: (a) cereals and millets; (b) pulses and legumes; (c) nuts; (d) milk and milk products; (e) meat; (f) vegetables; (g) fruits; (h) sugar; and (i) fats. The scoring was done as follows – daily intake was given a score of 7, three to six times a week was score 4, once a week was 1, and less than once a week was 0 (Badari et al., 2012). The FVS was calculated for each food group, which helped us to understand the number and types of food eaten in that group. The FVS of individual food groups was summed up to arrive at the total FVS. In order to classify the FVS as ‘low’ or ‘high’, we calculated the minimum and maximum scores for each food group and the overall score. The score above mid-point was classified as ‘high FVS’ and those below as ‘low FVS’.

**SES** – The Updated Modified Kuppuswamy SES for the year 2019 was used to assess the SES of the households (Mohd Saleem, 2019). The scale included information about the education and occupation of the head of the household along with the monthly household income (in INR). The total scores of the scale ranged from 3 to 29. Based on this, the households were classified into five SES groups – ‘low’ (< 5), ‘upper-lower’ (5–10), ‘lower-middle’ (11–15), ‘upper-middle’ (16–25) and ‘upper’ (26–29) SES.

Other information regarding household size along with number of adults, senior citizens, adolescents and children was collected. We also included COVID-related information – if the household was located in a containment zone, food availability (if any food or food group was not available during lockdown), accessibility (how far did they have to travel to purchase their food supply), if they purchased food online and if any of the foods had become expensive during the lockdown.

**Statistical analysis:** The data were analysed using IBM SPSS 20. Mean  $\pm$  SD and frequency distribution were carried out for the FVS and sociodemographic characteristics respectively. Binary logistic regression was carried out to find out the variables that influence individual and total FVS. For all the individual and total FVS, the scores below median and above median were considered as dependent variables. The independent variables considered were number of adults, adolescents in the household and SES score. In the regression model for meat variety score,

we included the availability of meat (0 = yes, 1 = no) and controlled for the food preferences of the households – vegetarian and non-vegetarian. Further, in the regression models for vegetable and fruit groups, we tested if the rise in the cost (0 = no change, 1 = expensive) predicted their FVS.

## Results

Four hundred and fifty households participated in this study. The size of the household varied between a minimum of one to a maximum of 32 members. The mean size of the household was  $4.06 \pm 2.20$  members. The mean number of adults in the household was  $3.24 \pm 1.56$  (1–11). Nearly 56% of the households had at least one senior citizen residing with them. One-quarter of the households had at least one adolescent (mean:  $0.34 \pm 0.65$ ). Almost 22% of the households had at least one child below 10 years of age (mean:  $0.27 \pm 0.57$ ).

### SES of the households

The majority of the households (53.1%,  $n = 239$ ) belonged to the upper SES class. One-third of the households (33.3%,  $n = 150$ ) were from the upper-middle SES. The remaining 13.6% ( $n = 61$ ) of households belonged to the lower-middle and upper-lower SES. In over 80% of households, the head of the family was either a graduate (41.3%,  $n = 186$ ) or had a professional degree (41.3%,  $n = 186$ ). The rest of the head of households (18.4%,  $n = 78$ ) had completed either middle school or high school or held a diploma. Over half the head of households were employed as professionals (56%,  $n = 252$ ), such as engineers, chartered accountants, teachers and so on. Over 16% ( $n = 74$ ) of the head of households held senior managerial positions or were legislators. Nearly 9% ( $n = 40$ ) of the heads were unemployed. The rest of the heads (19%,  $n = 85$ ) were involved in technical or clerical or sales-related jobs. Nearly half the households (47.1%,  $n = 212$ ) had a monthly income of over INR 78,062 and 23% of the households ( $n = 105$ ) earned a monthly income between INR 39,033 and 78,062. Over 16% of the households ( $n = 75$ ) earned between INR 19,516 and 39,032 per month. The remaining households (12.9%,  $n = 58$ ) received an income of less than INR 19,515 per month.

### Food purchases during lockdown

Over two-thirds of the households ( $n = 314$ ) preferred vegetarian foods while the rest (30.2%,  $n = 136$ ) chose non-vegetarian foods. During the lockdown, nearly half of the households ( $n = 220$ ) were able to purchase food items within 500 metres of their residence. One-quarter of the households ( $n = 116$ ) purchased food items within a distance of 500–1000 metres from their homes. About 3% of families ( $n = 12$ ) purchased only online. The remaining households travelled more than a kilometre to buy food

**Table 1.** Mean  $\pm$  SD and percentage of households with low and high FVS.

Food group	Mean (min–max)	SD	Low FVS % (n)	High FVS % (n)
Cereals	21.48 (2–54)	7.7	87.7 (395)	12.3 (55)
Pulses	15.68 (0–66)	10.8	96.0 (432)	4.0 (18)
Nuts	7.29 (0–21)	5.6	73.6 (331)	26.4 (119)
Milk and products	12.99 (0–21)	3.4	21.4 (96)	78.6 (354)
Meat	4.19 (0–23)	5.0	98.0 (441)	2.0 (9)
Roots and tubers	14.08 (0–35)	6.0	76.7 (345)	23.3 (105)
Green leafy vegetables	6.18 (0–35)	6.0	94.2 (424)	5.8 (26)
Other vegetables	21.70 (0–70)	10.2	88.9 (400)	21.1 (50)
Total vegetables	41.97 (4–140)	18.1	93.6 (421)	6.4 (29)
Fruits	20.1 (0–84)	13.3	92.2 (415)	7.8 (35)
Sugars	8.75 (7–14)	2.0	-	100 (450)
Fats	10.96 (7–21)	3.3	53.6 (241)	46.4 (209)
Total FVS	185.36 (57–483)	58.0	84 (378)	16.0 (72)

items. About 9% of the families ( $n = 39$ ) preferred purchasing online and physical buying.

Over half the respondents ( $n = 240$ ) felt that the food items had become expensive during the lockdown while 17% ( $n = 76$ ) did not feel so. The remaining 30% ( $n = 134$ ) did not know about the prices of the food items. About one-third of the respondents ( $n = 152$ ) expressed that the cost of vegetables and fruits had risen during the lockdown. This was followed by non-vegetarian foods (7.6%,  $n = 34$ ), cereals and pulses (7.3%,  $n = 33$ ) and packaged and online ordered foods (4.4%,  $n = 20$ ). About 19% ( $n = 85$ ) of respondents felt that all the food items had become expensive.

The majority of the participants (93%,  $n = 418$ ) expressed that almost all foods were available. Of the participants who consumed flesh foods, 23.5% ( $n = 32$ ) mentioned that sea foods and other flesh foods were not available.

### FVS

The mean  $\pm$  SD of the FVS is presented in Table 1. Overall, 84% of the households reported low total FVS. The majority of the households were seen to have low FVS for almost all the food groups except for milk and milk products and sugar.

### Factors associated with FVS

We carried out binary logistic regression to find out the predictors of FVS. We did this individually for all the food groups and for the total FVS (Tables 2 and 3). The number of adults in the household were seen to positively predict the FVS of cereals, roots and tubers, other vegetables, overall vegetables, fruits, fat and total FVS ( $p < 0.05$ ).

**Table 2.** Binary logistic regression of cereal, pulses, milk and meat FVS with family members and SES variables.

Variables	Cereal FVS			Pulses FVS		
	B (SE)	OR	p	B (SE)	OR	p
Number of adults	0.150 (0.064)	1.161	0.020	0.999 (0.063)	1.104	0.117
Number of adolescents	0.261 (0.151)	1.298	0.084	0.228 (0.151)	1.334	0.057
SES score	0.020 (0.016)	1.020	0.217	-0.002 (0.016)	0.998	0.998
Variables	Milk FVS			Meat FVS <sup>a</sup>		
	B (SE)	OR	p	B (SE)	OR	p
Number of adults	0.044 (0.063)	1.045	0.483	0.047 (0.076)	1.048	0.534
Number of adolescents	0.027 (0.150)	1.316	0.067	0.303 (0.182)	1.354	0.095
SES score	0.039 (0.017)	1.040	0.020	-0.010 (0.020)	0.990	0.616
Availability of meat (1) <sup>b</sup>	-	-	-	-1.663 (0.650)	0.190	0.011

B: unstandardized regression co-efficient; SE: standard error; OR: odds ratio.

<sup>a</sup>Controlled for preference for non-vegetarian foods.

<sup>b</sup>Availability of meat (0 = yes, 1 = no).

Further, the socioeconomic variables also predicted the FVS of certain food groups. A higher household SES score was noted to predict lower FVS for fat ( $B = -0.062$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). On the other hand, a higher household SES score positively predicted the FVS of milk and milk products ( $B = 0.039$ ,  $p = 0.020$ ).

The non-availability of meat foods negatively predicted the meat FVS ( $p = 0.011$ ). As all the respondents reported 100% availability of other food groups, the variability was constant. As a result, the constant parameter was removed from the analysis.

## Discussion

We carried out the present study with an aim to understand the household diet diversity among urban Indian households during the COVID-19 lockdown. The findings suggest that access and availability of the food items remained largely unaffected in the urban areas during the lockdown. However, households reported poor diet diversity. This was seen despite the fact that the majority belonged to upper-middle and upper SES.

### Impact of lockdown on food access and food availability

The study participants did not report any challenges in accessibility and availability of food items except sea foods and flesh foods. Cariappa et al. (2020) also reported uninterrupted access to markets in India. It is noteworthy that the present study was restricted only to the urban areas. Rural India, on the other hand, may present a completely varied scenario.

A sizeable proportion of our participants expressed an increase in the cost of certain food items, particularly vegetables and fruits. In congruence with this, Tata-Cornell Institute (2020) reported that, during the months of March

to May 2020, the prices of non-cereal foods such as vegetables and fruits, pulses and eggs increased. Further, a general upward trend was noted in the retail food prices as suggested by the consumer food price index (Cariappa et al., 2020).

### Diet diversity during the lockdown

Majority of the households had poor diet diversity. Most of the households consumed not more than one to two staple cereals and pulses. Among cereals and millets, almost all the households reported consumption of rice and wheat. About 30 to 40% of the households consumed millets such as pearl millet, sorghum and finger millet at least once a week. Like millets, legumes seemed to be consumed less than pulses. Among the pulses, red gram *dal* (94%) and green gram *dal* (89.6%) emerged as the most commonly consumed by the households. About 32–57% of the households reported consumption of legumes such as whole lentils, *rajmah* (kidney beans), cow pea, moth beans, horsegram and field beans at least once a week. Households seemed to prefer processed cereal alternatives such as bread (77.1%) and breakfast cereals (62.2%) rather than millets and legumes.

Over 90% of the households reported daily intake of milk, and two-thirds of households consumed curd daily. Further, nearly 64% of the households consumed *paneer* or cottage cheese at least once a week. In India, tea with a small quantity of milk is a popular beverage which is consumed in almost every household irrespective of the SES. In addition to this, curd is an inseparable part of the meal in many parts of the country. This may explain the higher FVS for milk.

The FVS of vegetables and fruits was particularly low. The most commonly consumed vegetables on a daily basis were tomatoes, onions and potatoes. Many of the Indian curries and gravies have onion and tomato as the base. Potato is an integral part of cooking in several Indian households across the SES spectrum. The remaining

**Table 3.** Binary logistic regression of vegetables, fruits, sugar, fat and total FVS with family members and SES variables.

Variables	Roots and tubers			Green leafy vegetables			Other vegetables			Overall vegetable FVS		
	B (SE)	OR	p	B (SE)	OR	p	B (SE)	OR	p	B (SE)	OR	p
Number of adults	0.233 (0.067)	1.262	<0.001	0.116 (0.064)	1.123	0.071	0.145 (0.064)	1.156	0.024	0.235 (0.067)	1.265	<0.001
Number of adolescents	0.109 (0.150)	1.115	0.469	0.272 (0.152)	1.313	0.073	-0.102 (0.149)	0.903	0.493	0.034 (0.150)	1.034	0.823
SES score	0.010 (0.016)	1.010	0.559	-0.027 (0.016)	0.973	0.095	-0.004 (0.016)	0.996	0.817	0.015 (0.016)	1.015	0.376
Cost (I) <sup>#</sup>	0.176 (0.206)	1.192	0.393	-0.037 (0.206)	0.964	0.859	0.057 (0.203)	1.058	0.780	-0.253 (0.205)	0.777	0.218

Variables	Fruits FVS			Sugar FVS			Fat FVS			Total FVS		
	B (SE)	OR	p	B (SE)	OR	p	B (SE)	OR	p	B (SE)	OR	p
Number of adults	0.185 (0.065)	1.203	0.004	0.062 (0.067)	1.064	0.357	0.157 (0.066)	1.169	0.018	0.357 (0.073)	1.429	<0.001
Number of adolescents	0.109 (0.150)	1.115	0.465	0.076 (0.158)	1.079	0.629	0.087 (0.154)	1.091	0.573	0.104 (0.154)	1.109	0.501
SES score	0.012 (0.016)	1.013	0.449	-0.022 (0.017)	0.979	0.210	-0.062 (0.017)	0.940	<0.001	0.002 (0.017)	0.970	0.900
Cost (I) <sup>a</sup>	0.157 (0.206)	0.999	0.780	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

B: unstandardized regression co-efficient; SE: standard error; OR: odds ratio.

<sup>a</sup>Cost (0 = no change, 1 = expensive).

vegetables were consumed by 60–70% of the households. However, their frequency of consumption was not more than once a week. Likewise, the majority of the fruits were consumed in 75–80% of the households at least once a week.

Our findings of poor diet diversity resonate with those of previous studies. Gaiha et al. (2012) studied the diet quality of India between 1993 to 2009. They documented a drop in the urban consumption of cereals and pulses. Along with this, they observed a rise in the urban intake of milk and its products as well as fat. Kulkarni and Gokhale (2014) also noted that 90% of the participants had the lowest mean diversity for vegetables and fruits in higher socioeconomic areas of Mumbai. Likewise, Popkin et al. (2009) reviewed Indian diets and noted a rise in the availability and consumption of sugar. A recent survey among college students across India showed that about three-quarters of the participants had a poor dietary diversity score (Kumar et al., 2020).

### Association of food availability and diet diversity

Our respondents reported 100% availability of all the food items except meat foods. Our analysis suggested that the non-availability of the meat food group resulted in significantly lower FVS. During the early days of the pandemic, there was immense uncertainty looming over the source of the coronavirus. Several reports on social media were suggestive that the virus did spread through animal markets and foods. Such reports adversely hit the availability and the sales of meat and its products. As a result, the local meat shops were closed in the study period (March to May) and opened in late June.

Although nearly one-third of our participants reported an increase in the price of fruits and vegetables, this did not seem to impact the diet diversity of these foods. As mentioned earlier, Kulkarni and Gokhale (2014) reported poor diversity of vegetables and fruits among urban Indians belonging to higher economic groups. This is much in line with our study.

### Association of SES and diet diversity

The diversity of the diets consumed in households has been closely associated with the SES of the families. Studies carried out across the globe suggest that higher income and literacy levels were associated with greater FVS (Badari et al., 2012; Keding et al., 2012; Sonandi et al., 2017). Contrary to these findings, our current study indicated an inverse relationship between SES score and FVS of fat (B = -0.062,  $p < 0.001$ ). In the present study, over 85% of the households were from the upper and upper-middle SES. The majority of head of households were graduates or had professional degrees. The higher socioeconomic groups are considered to be more health conscious. Obesity and other comorbid conditions have been known to increase the risk of complications of COVID-19. This could have been a

reason for the lower FVS for fat consumption in the upper and upper-middle SES households.

Further, a positive correlation was noted between the FVS for milk and milk products and SES. In India, milk is considered to be a wholesome food that promotes growth during childhood and adolescence. During the pandemic, milk with turmeric was being promoted as an immunity-building home remedy. Besides this, turmeric milk and curd have been integral immune-boosting foods in a traditional Indian diet. Curd, being a probiotic, plays a vital role in promoting healthy gut microbiota. In a study conducted in Tehran, Iran during the lockdown, personal savings, occupation status of the head of the family and number of educated members positively influenced the diet diversity (Pakravan-Charvadeh et al., 2021a, 2021b). These factors could probably explain the relation observed.

### Association of number of adults and diet diversity

Regression analysis showed that the FVS of cereals, vegetables, fruits, fat and overall food groups was strongly associated with the number of adults in the family. Adults are one of the main consumers of food in the family. Thus, the more adults there are, the greater could be the variety of food consumed in households belonging to upper SES.

Studies conducted in Kenya, Uganda, Bangladesh and Iran during the lockdown reported an increase in food insecurity (Kansiime et al., 2021; Kundu et al., 2021; Pakravan-Charvadeh et al., 2021a, 2021b). Like India, all the mentioned nations are classified as developing economies. Unlike these studies, our study did not highlight food insecurity as a concern in urban India. The findings of the present study should be considered in the light of a few concerns. Firstly, owing to the restrictions imposed during the pandemic, we used convenience sampling. Secondly, we had to use electronic forms for collecting data. These forms were circulated via social media platforms. This restricted our participants to the upper-middle and upper SES. We were unable to include vulnerable groups such as below poverty line families, migrant workers and daily wage workers, who were impacted the most in our sample. As our participants were from the higher SES in urban areas, they did not experience any form of food insecurity. Despite this, it is alarming to find such poor diet diversity among the higher economic urban participants.

### Conclusions

To the best of our knowledge, this is one of the earliest studies from India regarding household diet quality during the pandemic. Though the upper SES households of urban India did not face challenges related to food insecurity, their diets during the national lockdown were less diverse. Studies conducted prior to the pandemic suggest the same. The lockdown did not seem to impact the access and availability of essential food items except meat. However, poor diversity of the key food groups such as pulses,

vegetables and fruits can adversely influence the nutritional status. Consumption of healthy diverse diets needs to be promoted more than ever before to enhance our nutritional status and immunity.

### Acknowledgement

We acknowledge all the respondents for willingly participating in our study.

### Authorship

Mitravinda Aneesh and Rita S Patil contributed to the study conception, design, material preparation and data collection. Statistical analysis was performed by Mitravinda Aneesh. The manuscript was prepared by both the authors. Both the authors read and approved the final manuscript.

### Declaration of conflicting interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.


### Ethical statement

This study was approved by the Institutional Ethics Research Committee of Maniben Nanavati Women's College, Mumbai, India (ERC/2020/Apr/01).

### Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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UGC APPROVED  
CARE LISTED JOURNAL

ISSN 2229-3620

GOVT. OF INDIA RNI NO. - UPBIL/2015/62096



# शोध संचार बुलेटिन

SIA

AN INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY QUARTERLY BILINGUAL  
PEER REVIEWED REFEREED RESEARCH JOURNAL

★ Vol. 10

★ Issue 39

★ July to September 2020

*Editor in Chief*  
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D.Litt. - Gold Medalist



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UGC APPROVED  
CARE LISTED JOURNAL  
GOVT. OF INDIA RNI NO. - UPBIL/2015/62096

ISSN No. 2229-3620



# SHODH SANCHAR

## Bulletin

AN INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY QUARTERLY BILINGUAL  
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• Vol. 10

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## INTERTEXTUALITY AND GUJARATI PLAY

Sejal Shah

## ABSTRACT

Today, the point of view of the author alone is no longer considered the most critical aspect of his/her creation, rather how a reader reads & interprets author's creation has become very important. Once a piece of literature is created, reader of that literature needs to be alert and aware while reading it. On one hand, the literary creation is about the experience, perceptions and interpretations of its author who is surrounded by the cultural, political and social undercurrents during his/her time, but on the other hand, reader has his/her own frame of reference in his/her time that may lead to an entirely different but not necessarily incorrect interpretation of same piece of literature. In fact, this process of readers reading, reacting and coming with his/her own interpretation provides a new meaning, a new aspect that adds to the creative quotient of the literary work. A play can be understood and interpreted through two highly engaging processes – performance in a theatre and reading of the story. And hence performance and reading themselves can lead to an entirely different interpretation of same play. In this paper we will critically read important play of well-known Chinu Mody's 'Khalifa no Veshyani Aurangzeb'

**Keywords :** Intertextuality, drama, reader, text, paratext

## INTRODUCTION

Today, the point of view of the author alone is no longer considered the most critical aspect of his/her creation, rather how a reader reads & interprets author's creation has become very important. Once a piece of literature is created, reader of that literature needs to be alert and aware while reading it.

The concept of intertextuality has been significant within a range of theoretical debates (Orr 2003). Though often assumed to be a matter of one text directly citing or quoting material from another, intertextuality has also been theorized as underpinning the general condition of textuality itself. As French structuralist Julia Kristeva (1969) argues: "Every text takes shape as a mosaic of citations." This has become a crucial concept in structuralist attacks on the authority of the author (Barthes 1977; Allen 2000). It is argued that language and textuality, the structuring systems, should form the

proper objects of analysis, and not authorial agency.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Literary criticism refers to the analysing of a literary text with a particular approach. Critical, comparative and appreciation approach have been used to understand/gain a new meaning of text.

Intertextuality postulates that all texts are intrinsically entangled with other texts. Texts are a form of translanguistic semiotic practice and, in being permutations of other texts, are both destructive and constructive of language, genre, style, norms, and meaning. In this sense, they are both productive and redistributive of meaning while never being authoritative, bounded, or foreclosing interpretation by readers. Furthermore, texts always reflect the structures of dominance and marginality in society.

Recently, new avenues have emerged in 'Sahitya Vivechan' i.e. literary criticism. Now, references have

\*Maniben Nanavati Women's College, Vileparle, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

2019-2020 Publications



**Peer Reviewed Refereed and UGC  
Listed Journal (Journal No. 40776)**

**ISSN 2277 - 5730  
AN INTERNATIONAL  
MULTIDISCIPLINARY QUARTERLY  
RESEARCH JOURNAL**

# AJANTA

**Volume - IX, Issue - IV  
October - December - 2020  
English Part - II**

**Impact Factor / Indexing  
2019 - 6.399  
[www.sjifactor.com](http://www.sjifactor.com)**

**Ajanta Prakashan**

ISSN 2277 - 5730  
AN INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY  
QUARTERLY RESEARCH JOURNAL

# AJANTA

Volume - IX

Issue - IV

OCTOBER - DECEMBER - 2020

ENGLISH PART - II

Peer Reviewed Refereed  
and UGC Listed Journal

Journal No. 40776



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## 9. Knowledge Awareness and Practices of Anganwadi Sevikas Regarding Washing Methods used for Fruits and Vegetables a Step towards Healthy Family

**Ms. Shama Chavan**

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### Introduction

The Integrated Child Development (ICDS) scheme is one of the largest program conducted for community in India. The target group which are included in this program are pregnant ladies, lactating mothers in the age group of 16-44 years, this program is also for children up to 6 years of age. The main objective of this community based program is to create awareness among the target group, improvise the health, nutrition and education of the community where it is carried out. This started on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1975 (Sachdev and Dasgupta, 2001). These ICDS centre are also called as Anganwadi's where the children come and get their pre primary education. The workers who work in these centres are called as the anganwadi workers or sevikas. The anganwadi workers play a very important role in the health care system of our country. They are in direct contact with the women of reproductive age group and the children. Most of these come from the low socio economic strata. The anganwadi workers better known as anganwadi Sevikas play a very important role in bringing about awareness and improving the health and sanitation practices in the community. They act as important catalysts that help to make children and their parents aware about the why are it necessary to wash fruits and vegetables before consumption. The schemes that are initiated by the Government of India are implemented by these anganwadi centres across India. These sevikas visit each house and try to make them aware about the different conditions like importance of sanitation and hygiene etc... The Integrated Child Development Services Scheme (ICDS) was incorporated only with the view to improve the health concerns in the rural areas in India. The anganwadi centre targets various issues which they want to eradicate in the community. They also celebrate the International days which help to make the community aware like the breast feeding week or the



th etc... Polio eradication, polio vaccination, meningitis, sanitation and topics covered by the anganwadi centres. In urban set up there are slums e been started. The sevikas take up topics of public interest and carry out they are answerable to the zonal officers for the same. Poor health if of life the catch growth is faster. The ICDS programs are one of the ch was started with the aim to improve the catch up growth among ars of life (Shilpa M et al, 2014). One can achieve the goal of accessible services at the grass root level with this system where the anganwadi ly take up this responsibility. It is considered a community based frontline ork relentlessly for the society (Iram etal, 2017).

and the household methods used by the anganwadi sevikas to wash the fruits es.

their awareness about the use of pesticides on the fresh produce.

out their preferences of consuming dark green leafy vegetables.

and the duration for which they wash the fruits and vegetables before n.

adi sevikas were asked to assemble at ICDS centre Andheri. They were study and asked to fill in the details in a questionnaire. The questionnaire formation of the participant, the number of members in the family, their they consumed fruits & vegetables on regular basis. The type of dark green nsumed in the family. A question was included on whether they consume g to the change in season. They were asked about how they wash the fruits ore consumption. The respondents were asked about the duration for which ts and vegetables. Also it was asked in the questionnaire whether they were the fruits and vegetables are sprayed with pesticides either during cultivation. Their responses were taken and average and percentage was calculated for the ollowed by a talk on how to consume low salt, low fat and low calorie foods was in Marathi language as most of their mother tongue was Marathi and they ite the language with ease.

### **Education of the Anganwadi Sevikas**

Among the 167 anganwadi sevikas around 39.76% (66) of them had completed their 12<sup>th</sup> standard of higher secondary education. Only 2.39% (5) were post graduates. About 29.34% (49) of the respondents had completed their 12<sup>th</sup> standard but not their graduation. 22.15% of them had passed in the 10<sup>th</sup> standard examination and could complete their schooling. Around 6% (10) of the respondents had not completed their schooling.

### **Methods used for Washing of Fruits & Vegetables**

It was asked in the questionnaire whether they used tap water, hot water, salt water or alum treated water for cleaning the fruits and vegetables. The respondents informed about the ways they used for washing of fruits and vegetables before consumption. Out of 167 of the anganwadi sevikas about 57.48% (96) of them responded that they used hot water for washing these perishable products. Only 5(7.46%) of them used running tap water for washing the fruits and vegetables. 27.54% i.e. 46 of the respondents answered that they used salt water for washing. Also some of them mentioned whether they used both hot water and salt water for washing. About 19 of them (11.3%) said that they used hot salty water for the washing technique. None of them used alum water for cleaning the produce.

### **Duration of Washing /Cleaning**

The respondents were asked the duration for which they washed the produce before consumption. The time mentioned was either 5minutes or 10 minutes.

### **Awareness of the Usage of Pesticide**

Questionnaire included information whether they were aware that most fruits and vegetables were either sprayed with or treated with some kind of pesticides during the growth of the plant or during the harvesting phase. Some mentioned that they were daughters of farmers and were aware that fruits and vegetables are sprayed or treated with the pesticides for increasing their growth and to keep the pests at bay.

### **Results**

The average age of the participants was found to be 39 years. Around 7 of the participants lived in a joint family, while average number of family members was 4 among most of the participants. The commonly consumed vegetables were onions, potatoes, tomatoes and brinjal. While the commonly bought dark green leafy vegetables were coriander, spinach, fenugreek, dill leaves and mint. Among 167 participants 39.52% of them had completed their

12<sup>th</sup> standard. 6% of them had gone to school but not completed their school education. Around 91% (152) were aware that fruits and vegetables are treated with pesticides as some mentioned that their parents were into farming. The washing method used for was 57% (96) soaked them in hot water for 5 minutes while 27% (46) of the participants soaked in salt water, the rest 7% (11) just cleaned them under running water. Out of 167 only 19 participants, which accounts to 11.37% of the workers used hot salty water to wash vegetables. None of them used alum treated water for washing.

### Discussion

All the programs started by the governing agencies or the ministry have to be implemented by these sevikas. They adopt various ways by which they can explain and promote their point in the community. Street play, rallies or one act and mime are the methods used by these sevikas for creating awareness among the community. The major topics covered by them are health, hygiene, sanitation, eating habits, vaccination schedules and its importance. The target group includes pregnant ladies, lactating mothers and children from 0-6 years who are the vulnerable sections of the society. The above survey study was carried at J.B Nagar, Andhra Pradesh which included 5 ICDS centres in that area. This was attended by 167 anganwadi sevikas who had more than 3000 children in their centres. They were asked questions which included the type of fruits and vegetables that they buy from the market, the place from where they brought, the method of washing the brought produce, the duration for which they wash. The answers showed that 99% (166) of them bought produce from the local market in their area. All consumed dark green leafy vegetables and other vegetables on a daily basis and also bought the seasonal produce. Therefore, the washing of these products bought from the market was equally important. The sevikas were aware that there is extensive use of pesticides on crops as some claimed that they were farmer's children so they had seen how these pesticides are used on crops. They mentioned the use of hot water for washing; most of them soaked the vegetables for 5 minutes in hot water which shows that they are aware that the pesticides have to be removed from the surface. As the time of soaking may not be enough for removing the pesticide residue efforts have to be taken to create awareness regarding how to reduce this. 7% of them used just the tap water for washing the fruits and vegetables which may not be enough to remove the residue from the surface. 27% soaked in salty water for 5 minutes in order to remove the residue. The supervisors will provide adequate information to the members who will further carry the same program within their area.

community (Taksande A, Tiwari S and Kuthe A, 2009). There is a need to create appropriate insight as to how the message can be passed to these workers and later reach the community (Bhasin S, Kumar R, Singh S K.K. Dubey and Kap U, 1995). Different ways of washing should be used for dark green leafy vegetables as the surface area of these is more and there are chances that more amount of pesticide residue remains on the leaves.

### Conclusion

The results show that knowledge and awareness of the anganwadi sevikas was not adequate. Therefore there is an urgent need for further educating them on certain ways and techniques for washing the fruits and vegetables so that the pesticide residues on them are reduced. They are aware that pesticides are used, but still they have to be taught the actual method by which they can minimise the surface residue. This will help them to create awareness among the community as well. Their awareness was related to their experience over a period of time. Their knowledge was related to their exposure in the community (Shridhar S Baliga\*, Walvekar P R, 2017). If these workers are made aware about the thorough cooking practices as the standard given by WHO it will be useful for them when they prepare the food for their own anganwadi children (Ganta et al, 2019). All the anganwadi centres under ICDS scheme serve lunch to the children, most of the time this food is prepared by the sevikas in the centre, if adequate knowledge is imparted to them regarding the washing techniques we can ensure that young children in the growing years will receive pesticide residue free food.

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