The Importance of Maternal Mental Health on Child Nutritional Status

Suraiya Anisa

The City College of New York

ENGL 21003: Writing for the Sciences

Professor Slentz

30 October 2022

Abstract

The scientific report titled "Maternal mental health and child nutritional status in an urban slum in Bangladesh: A cross-sectional study," written by Ahad Mahmud Khan, uncovers his findings on a study he conducted to determine whether there was a correlation between maternal mental health and child nutritional status in a poor urban population in Bangladesh. The impact purpose, audience, text, and setting have on understanding the risk factors associated with maternal mental was discussed in depth. The purpose is informative as he uses statistics and an objective tone to explain his method of research and findings. As for the text, Khan uses his knowledge of public health and disease research to build his credibility. His goal is clearly to inform the reader of maternal mental health in hopes of changing how physicians treat their patients and how policymakers approach this matter.

Keywords: maternal, mental, health, public health, informative, Bangladesh

The Importance of Maternal Mental Health on Child Nutritional Status

The scientific report titled "Maternal mental health and child nutritional status in an urban slum in Bangladesh: A cross-sectional study" focuses on the association between a mother's mental health and their capability to care for their child. The study was conducted in a poor urban population in Bangladesh largely due to the country's high prevalence of common mental disorders (CMD). Common mental disorders include anxiety and depression, usually present in mothers of children under five. The impact purpose, audience, text, and setting have on understanding the risk factors associated with maternal mental health was discussed in depth. The author effectively informs his audience that - through face-to-face interviews, measurements of the children's height and weight, and the observation of the mother and child's hygiene practices - maternal mental health significantly impacts a child's malnutrition.

The author, being the person who composed the text, is important to consider when evaluating credibility. This article is written by Ahad Mahmud Khan. Given that he has a Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery and was a Ph.D. student at The Usher Institute of Population Health Sciences and Informatics, he is more than knowledgeable on the topic of mental health disorders. Not to mention he has experience in public health and disease research. His employment includes his work as a research investigator and research physician in the field of public health. Khan's knowledge and high level of education are apparent when looking at the methods and vocabulary he utilizes when conducting his study. Khan begins building his credibility with reputable sources and by citing convincing facts and statistics that he obtained using several data collection techniques.

In the text of the research article, Khan starts by discussing the prevalence of common mental disorders in mothers around the world. This is the setting that explains what led Khan to conduct

the study. Common mental disorders in mothers with children under five were researched and looked into in many countries except Bangladesh. The topic of maternal mental health in Bangladesh is urgent and needs attention in the scientific community. This can be understood as Khan's primary motive for conducting this research, as large organizations did not fund this research. Moreover, the credibility of the essay is well established by Khan's use of statistics to justify his reason for doing this study. His reasoning was clearly to understand the relationship between maternal mental health and child nutrition among the urban population. As stated by Khan (2022), "according to the Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (BDHS) 2011, the prevalence of stunting, wasting and underweight was 41%, 16%, and 36%, respectively." By mentioning this, Khan can segue into the possible factors of malnutritions such as child age, sex, birth weight, previous birth interval, parent's education, maternal nutrition, low socioeconomic status, child feeding practice, hygiene, child illness, and health-seeking behavior. Khan then proceeds to inform the audience about how he measures the possible factors of malnutrition. According to Khan (2022), "a structured questionnaire was used that included questions on socio demographic information, childcare practices and child illness. There were also questions from Self-Reporting Questionnaire-20 (SRQ-20) [25], Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS) [26], and Kuppuswamy's socioeconomic status scale [27]." Here, Khan's tone is intelligent and objective. Also, by discussing this, readers can trust that the study was conducted using methods expected from an experienced researcher. This matters because the audience must be able to trust the conclusion derived from the findings. Overall, the text in the article contains many logical appeals supported by research causing the readers to have confidence in Khan's results that maternal CMD is associated with poorer child feeding practice, poorer hygiene practice, and poorer preventive care.

Khan is open about his purpose for writing this research paper. As mentioned before, Khan's approaches and choice of words clearly show that he intends to inform the audience about his findings to understand the relationship between maternal mental health and child nutrition among the urban population. He uses his knowledge of public health and disease research to assess the relationship between maternal mental health and child nutritional status to contribute to "the knowledge base of policymakers in decision-making to combat child malnutrition" (Khan, 2022).

The targeted audience is policymakers, health professionals, and those interested in improving and understanding the child nutrition status in Bangladesh. In particular, those originating from Bangladesh would be the intended audience as it concerns their country. Khan wants policymakers to strengthen their understanding of malnutrition and why it is significantly higher in Bangladesh. This research will likely lead to intervention programs and other decisions that fight against malnutrition in the country.

It is my belief that Khan chose to inform health professionals in Bangladesh to help them gain another perspective on the possible risk factors of CMD. This scientific report will help health professionals diagnose and treat mental disorders in mothers in poor urban areas. This research article will possibly intrigue other researchers to direct their attention to the growing prevalence of maternal mental health and what that means in a child's upbringing. As a result, researchers in the scientific community can use Khan's research as a reference when conducting a similarly improved study but with fewer limitations.

Works Cited

Khan AM (2022) Maternal mental health and child nutritional status in an urban slum in

Bangladesh: A cross-sectional study. PLOS Glob Public Health 2(10): e0000871.

https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pgph.0000871