INTERNSHIP

(SHPL309A)

"Content and Thematic Analysis of the Study on Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Children in Four States of India"

Internship Report submitted

in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of

Bachelor of Arts
in
Political Science (Hons.)

By

Niksha Agrawal

(Roll No. 2208380041)

Under the guidance of

Dr. Susmita Mitra, Council for Social Development (CSD),
New Delhi
&
Dr. Maitree Devi, K.R. Mangalam University



Political Science (Hons.) Programme

School of Humanities (SOHS)

K.R. Mangalam University, Gurugram – 122103

DECLARATION

I hereby certify that this internship report, submitted by me, Niksha Agrawal (Roll No. 2208380041), is a record of internship work completed for the course titled Internship (SHPL309A) during the academic year 2024–2025, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Arts (Hons.) Political Science.

I hereby declare that the content of this internship report is my original work, and that wherever ideas, data or words from other sources have been used, they have been properly cited. Proper citations and references have been provided in accordance with academic standards. I affirm that I have adhered to the principles of academic honesty and integrity throughout this report and have not misrepresented, fabricated or falsified any information or sources.

I acknowledge that any violation of these principles may result in disciplinary action by the institute and may also invoke legal consequences from the original sources, particularly in cases of improper citation or failure to obtain necessary permissions. Furthermore, I declare that my supervisor and the university shall not be held responsible for any infringement of intellectual property rights or copyright associated with this report.

Niksha Agrawal

Roll No.
2208380041

Signature

K.R. Mangalam University

Date – August 30, 2024

Dr. Maitree Devi
Co - Supervisor
Dr. Maitree Devi
Assistant professor
political science programme
School of Humanities (SOHS)
K R Mangalam University

COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

SANGHA RACHANA, 53, LODI ESTATE, NEW DELHI-110003 (India)
Telephones : 91-11-24615383, 24611700, 24618660, 24692655, Fax :91-11-24616061
~~<csdnd@del2.vsnl.net.in>~~ www.csdindia.org
csd-nd @csdindia-org

TO WHOM SO EVER IT MAY CONCERN

This is to certify that Ms Niksha Agrawal, a student of K.R Mangalam University, Gurugram, Haryana, has successfully completed her internship as a Research Intern with the Council for Social Development (CSD), for the period 1st July 2024 to 2nd August 2024.

She had worked under the supervision of Dr Susmita Mitra, Assistant Professor, CSD, in online mode, and assisted her in the following works:

- She has gone through the training of content and thematic analysis as a part of the qualitative research method.
- She has also applied her learning by going through the rigorous process of doing content and thematic analysis of a recently completed study of CSD "Study on the Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Children in Four States of India" to prepare a brief thematic writeup.

Ms Niksha Agrawal has a keen interest in learning new things, the capacity to understand new concepts and skills, and the ability to apply the same within strict deadlines. During the period of her internship, she was found to be sincere and hardworking.

We wish her success in all her future academic endeavours.

(Prof. Nitya Nanda)
Director, CSD

Date: 05.08.24
Place: New Delhi

COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
DIRECTOR
NEW DELHI-110003

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Council for Social Development (CSD) for providing me with the opportunity to intern as a Research Intern from 1st July 2024 to 2nd August 2024. The insightful experience I gained has significantly enhanced my understanding of content analysis and thematic research methodologies.

I am deeply grateful to Prof. Nitya Nanda, Director, CSD, for allowing me to contribute to the impactful "Study on the Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Children in Four States of India". My heartfelt thanks go to Dr. Susmita Mitra, Assistant Professor, CSD, for her guidance and valuable support throughout the internship. Her mentorship provided me with both the theoretical and practical knowledge necessary to carry out rigorous research.

I would also like to thank the entire team at CSD for their cooperation during this internship and for fostering a welcoming learning environment. This experience has been an excellent platform for my professional and academic growth, and I look forward to applying these skills in future endeavours.

This internship would not have been possible without the constant help of our programme coordinator and supervisor, Dr. Maitree Devi, whose leadership and support have been pivotal in guiding me through the complexities of the research. I express my gratitude to my supervisors, Dr. Susmita Mitra and Dr. Maitree Devi, for giving me their valuable time and guidance.

Lastly, I extend my gratitude to my university, K.R. Mangalam University, for facilitating this internship opportunity.



K.R. Mangalam University

(Signature)

Niksha Agrawal

Roll No. – 2208380041

B.A. (Hons.) Political Science

Semester – V

Date – August 30, 2024

Brief Overview of the Organisation

The Council for Social Development (CSD) is a renowned research and advocacy organisation based in New Delhi, India, dedicated to advancing social development through interdisciplinary research, policy analysis and training programmes. Established with a vision to address the multifaceted challenges of social justice and inclusive growth, CSD has positioned itself as a key player in influencing public policy and fostering social change in India.

CSD's mission is to promote equitable development by focusing on critical social issues such as poverty, education, health, gender equality and environmental sustainability. The organisation engages in comprehensive research that aims to inform and guide policymakers, practitioners and civil society in making evidence-based decisions that lead to the betterment of marginalised communities.

One of the distinguishing features of CSD is its commitment to addressing the root causes of social inequities. The organisation undertakes in-depth studies on various socio-economic issues, exploring the complex interplay between social structures, economic policies and environmental factors. By producing high-quality research, CSD contributes significantly to the discourse on sustainable development, particularly in the context of India's rapidly changing socio-economic landscape.

CSD also plays a vital role in capacity-building and knowledge dissemination. The organisation conducts workshops, seminars and training programmes aimed at empowering individuals and communities with the knowledge and skills needed to advocate for their rights and participate actively in the development process. By fostering a collaborative environment that includes academia, government agencies, international organisations and grassroots movements, CSD ensures that its research and advocacy efforts have a wide-reaching impact.

Moreover, CSD is actively involved in policy advocacy, using its research findings to influence and shape public policies at both national and international levels. The organisation works closely with policymakers to address pressing social issues, providing them with the tools and insights necessary to create policies that are not only effective but also socially just.

Nature of Internship

During my internship at the Council for Social Development (CSD), New Delhi, which took place from 1st July 2024 to 2nd August 2024, I worked as a Research Intern under the mentorship of Dr. Susmita Mitra, Assistant Professor at CSD. The internship was conducted in online mode, and I was involved in the content and thematic analysis of a recently completed CSD study, “Study on the Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Children in Four States of India”. My primary responsibilities included engaging in the thematic and content analysis, which involved reading, coding and analysing the report. This role required close collaboration with Dr. Mitra, who provided me with valuable mentorship and guidance. Through this experience, I gained hands-on expertise in academic research, particularly in content and thematic analysis, and deepened my understanding of how COVID-19 impacted children, especially those from vulnerable sections of society. The internship not only enhanced my research skills but also provided critical insights into the field of social development, which will be instrumental in my future academic and professional pursuits.

ABSTRACT

This internship report highlights the research and analytical work I undertook during my internship with the Council for Social Development (CSD), New Delhi, from 1st July 2024 to 2nd August 2024. Under the supervision of Dr. Susmita Mitra, Assistant Professor at CSD, I was involved in the thematic and content analysis of the study titled “Study on the Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Children in Four States of India”, which covered Jharkhand, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

The internship provided an opportunity to gain a solid foundation in qualitative research methodologies, particularly content and thematic analysis. These methods were used to systematically analyse the impact of the pandemic on children’s rights, including their right to protection, education, nutrition and overall well-being. The report summarises the analysis and thematic categorisation of findings related to these aspects, along with observations on administrative shortcomings and stakeholders’ efforts to mitigate the pandemic’s effects.

Throughout the internship, I learnt to grasp new concepts quickly, adhere to strict deadlines and deliver well-structured, insightful outputs. This work contributed to a deeper understanding of the various challenges faced by children during the pandemic and their implications for policy and social welfare. The experience has strengthened my research skills and fostered my interest in social development issues, particularly in the context of children’s rights and welfare.

Key Words: Thematic and Content Analysis, Research Methodologies, Children’s Rights, Right to Protection, Education, Nutrition, Overall Well-being, Thematic Categorisation, Administrative Shortcomings, Stakeholders’ Efforts, New Concepts, Strict Deadlines, Well-structured Outputs, Policy, Social Welfare, Research Skills, Social Development.

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Chapter – 1
Introduction

This report summarises my internship at the Council for Social Development (CSD), New Delhi, where I worked as a Research Intern from 1st July to 2nd August 2024 under the guidance of Dr. Susmita Mitra. CSD is a prominent research institute focused on socio-economic issues in India. My primary responsibility was to conduct qualitative research using content and thematic analysis of the recently completed CSD study, "*Study on the Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Children in Four States of India*", which covered the states of Jharkhand, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. I gained valuable skills in extracting, organising and interpreting data related to children's rights during the pandemic. This report details the thematic analysis process, my contributions and the key insights I developed regarding the pandemic's impact on vulnerable populations, especially children, while also reflecting on how the internship enhanced my research capabilities and my understanding of social development issues.

Chapter – 2
Literature Review

Research Orientation:

The research orientation is grounded in qualitative analysis, focusing on understanding the nuanced effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on children's rights. This involves examining empirical data from the CSD report, thematic analysis of its content, and synthesising findings to highlight key issues and responses. The study emphasises the need for a comprehensive understanding of how the pandemic intersected with various aspects of children's lives and the systemic failures that worsened their situation.

Theoretical Framework:

The theoretical framework guiding this review is rooted in children's rights theory and social justice. The framework draws on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 1989, and its emphasis on the rights to protection, education, health and well-being. It also incorporates principles from social justice theories that focus on equity and on addressing systemic inequalities. This theoretical lens helps in analysing how the pandemic disproportionately affected marginalised children and in evaluating the effectiveness of interventions aimed at protecting their rights.

Synthesis:

The synthesis of the literature reveals that the COVID-19 pandemic had a multifaceted impact on children's rights. The right to protection was compromised due to increased risks of abuse and exploitation, exacerbated by socio-economic stresses. The shift to online education highlighted and widened existing disparities, particularly affecting marginalised and rural children. Early childhood care services were disrupted, leading to significant setbacks in health and developmental support. Nutritional deficiencies emerged as a critical issue due to economic downturns and disrupted food distribution. Overall, the pandemic's impact on children's mental health and safety was profound, with increased stress and domestic violence reported.

The literature also highlights the administrative shortcomings that hindered effective responses, such as inadequate infrastructure for online learning and gaps in social safety nets. However, various stakeholders, including NGOs and government bodies, made notable efforts to mitigate these effects, though their effectiveness was often limited by systemic challenges.

International comparisons suggest that while some countries implemented effective measures to safeguard children's rights, India faced unique challenges that necessitated tailored solutions. This review underscores the need for targeted policy interventions, improved support systems and a more robust framework for protecting children's rights during crises.

Chapter – 3
Problem Formulation and Objectives

A. Problem Formulation:

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted lives worldwide, especially impacting vulnerable sections of society, including children. In India, the pandemic exacerbated the challenges faced by children across various dimensions such as education, health, protection, nutrition and well-being. This led to potential violations of children's rights and highlighted the gaps in existing systems designed to safeguard their well-being. However, comprehensive data and analysis on the pandemic's specific impact on children remain limited, making it difficult to address these challenges effectively.

To bridge this gap, the Council for Social Development (CSD) conducted a detailed study titled "Study on the Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Children in Four States of India". My internship aimed to contribute to this study by applying content and thematic analysis techniques to the research, identifying key areas where children's rights were affected, and analysing the steps taken by stakeholders to mitigate these effects.

The problem lies in the lack of accessible, in-depth analysis of how the pandemic affected different rights of children, the administrative shortcomings that worsened these impacts, and the gaps in stakeholder responses.

B. Objective:

The primary objective of my internship was to assist in the research and analysis of the CSD study on the impact of COVID-19 on children. Specifically, the internship focused on:

1. Learning and applying content and thematic analysis techniques within the framework of qualitative research.

2. Analysing CSD's report on the pandemic's impact on children's rights across four Indian states (Jharkhand, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh), focusing on key rights such as education, protection, nutrition and overall well-being.

3. Compiling thematic write-ups based on the analysis to provide a coherent understanding of how different dimensions of children's rights were affected.

4. Identifying administrative shortcomings and evaluating the responses of stakeholders in protecting children's rights during the pandemic.

5. Gaining experience in academic research, data analysis and the practical application of research methodologies.

This experience aimed to provide a deeper understanding of the impact of crises on vulnerable populations, along with the hands-on research skills necessary for academic and professional growth.

C. Research Questions:

This study seeks to address several key questions related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children's rights:

1. How did the pandemic affect different dimensions of children's rights, including protection, education, early childhood care, nutrition and overall well-being?
2. What were the administrative and systemic shortcomings that exacerbated these impacts?
3. How effective were the responses of various stakeholders in mitigating the adverse effects on children during the pandemic?
4. What lessons can be learnt from international practices and policies in protecting children's rights during such crises?

Chapter – 4
Methodology of the Project

The methodology for this internship project involved a combination of qualitative research techniques, including content analysis and thematic analysis. The approach was designed to systematically examine and interpret the CSD report on the impact of COVID-19 on children. The methodology can be broken down into the following steps:

1. **Training and Familiarisation:**
    a. **Training in Content and Thematic Analysis:** Received comprehensive training in qualitative research methods, focusing on content and thematic analysis.
    b. **Understanding the Report:** Familiarised myself with the CSD report titled “Study on the Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Children in Four States of India” to understand its structure, content and key findings.

2. **Content Extraction and Organisation:**
    a. **Colour-Coding Technique:** Used a colour-coding method to systematically highlight different sections of the report. The colour scheme was as follows:
        i. Yellow for Right to Protection
        ii. Green for Right to Education and Rights Against Discrimination
        iii. Blue for Right to Early Childhood Care
        iv. Magenta for Right to Food and Nutrition
        v. Grey for Overall Well-being
        vi. An additional colour for administrative responses and shortcomings (introduced during implementation; see Chapter 5)

b. **Identification of Key Sections:** Extracted and organised relevant sections of the report based on the colour-coded themes to identify areas of impact and violations.

3. **Thematic Compilation:**
   a. **Categorisation:** Categorised the extracted information into five key themes: Right to Protection, Right to Education and Rights Against Discrimination, Right to Early Childhood Care, Right to Food and Nutrition, and Overall Well-being.
   b. **Analysis of Impact and Responses:** Analysed the impacts on each theme and highlighted the steps taken by stakeholders to address these impacts, noting administrative shortcomings.

4. **Detailed Analysis:**
   a. **Thematic Write-ups:** Compiled detailed thematic write-ups based on the colour-coded analysis, focusing on the implications of the pandemic for children's rights and well-being.
   b. **Additional Factors:** Identified and explored additional factors such as economic impacts, political dynamics and connectivity issues in rural areas.

5. **Review and Recommendations:**
   a. **Comparison with International Initiatives:** Suggested comparing India's response with international initiatives to enhance understanding and improve policies.
   b. **Policy Recommendations:** Suggested policy recommendations for targeted interventions and improved support mechanisms based on the analysis.

Chapter – 5
Implementation

The initial phase of my work involved training in content and thematic analysis, during which I meticulously extracted relevant sections from the report and employed a colour-coding technique to categorise the information. I organised the data thematically to focus on various dimensions of children's rights impacted by the pandemic, such as protection, education, early childhood care and nutrition. This approach not only facilitated a structured analysis but also enabled me to pinpoint areas requiring further exploration, such as economic impacts and network connectivity issues.

In the subsequent phase, I continued applying the colour-coding scheme to highlight impacts on children's rights and the responses of different stakeholders. I used colours to differentiate between various aspects of rights and introduced a new colour to denote administrative responses and shortcomings. This systematic categorisation helped in tracking both the positive and negative effects of the pandemic on children's rights.

The final phase involved a detailed thematic compilation of the colour-coded analysis. I developed comprehensive write-ups on five key themes: Right to Protection, Right to Education and Rights Against Discrimination, Right to Early Childhood Care, Right to Food and Nutrition, and Overall Well-being. Each theme was examined to assess the pandemic's impact, the resulting challenges and the effectiveness of interventions by stakeholders.

Chapter – 6
Results

The analysis revealed significant disruptions across multiple dimensions of children's rights. The Right to Protection was severely compromised, with increased incidences of child labour, trafficking, abuse and early marriages. The shift to digital education exposed and widened existing disparities, particularly affecting marginalised children and girls. Disruptions in early childhood services led to declines in health, nutrition and developmental support for young children. Nutritional deficiencies were exacerbated by economic downturns and disrupted food distribution systems. Lastly, the overall well-being of children was affected by increased stress, anxiety and domestic violence. NGOs and other stakeholders made efforts to mitigate these effects, though their effectiveness was often limited by systemic challenges.

These findings underscored the urgent need for targeted interventions and enhanced support mechanisms to address the multifaceted challenges faced by children during the pandemic. The systematic analysis provided valuable insights into the gaps and opportunities for improving policies and support systems to better protect children's rights in future crises.

Chapter – 7
Conclusions and Future Scope

The internship provided a comprehensive insight into the multifaceted impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children, as explored through the Council for Social Development's report. Through a structured approach involving content and thematic analysis, I was able to identify and categorise significant impacts on children's rights, including protection, education, early childhood care, nutrition and overall well-being. This work highlighted critical areas where children's rights were compromised, such as increased child labour, educational disparities, disrupted early childhood services and nutritional deficiencies, along with the broader psychological and socio-economic impacts.

The findings underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions and robust policy frameworks to address these challenges and safeguard children's rights in future crises. There is substantial room for further exploration, including a comparative analysis of international responses to similar crises, a deeper investigation into the role of economic and political dynamics, and a closer look at the long-term consequences of disrupted services on child development. Future research could also focus on evaluating the effectiveness of existing policies and stakeholder responses, with the aim of developing more resilient and inclusive systems for protecting children's rights in times of crisis.

References

Poornima, M., Mitra, S., Sharma, A., Kaur, R., & Sinha, G. (2022). *Study on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on children in four states in India*. Council for Social Development (CSD), New Delhi.