

Growth and Health Transition of School Children in Mumbai Suburb

*Nithya Sai Narayana

Abstract

Background: Widespread nutritional deficiencies are cause of concern among schoolchildren. The aim of the study is to analyze the health issues and growth transition of School Children in Mumbai suburb.

Methods: Health Checkup data for the years 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11 of Primary Secondary and Junior College children in the age group of 5 years to 18 years conducted by an NGO called SHARP (School Health Annual Report Programme) was taken for analysis. The number of students who underwent this health checkup is 3720, 2737, 3906 in the respective years. Health issues and growth parameters like height and weight were considered for analysis in this study.

Results: Both in the case of male and female children underweight continued to be on the increasing trend and normal weight children have shifted to overweight and obese category. The problem is to be more in the case of male children and as the normal weight students have shown a decreasing trend in all the three years and in the case of girl children the overweight category has shifted to obese category in year 2010-11. Dental and skin problem are the dominating health issues with an increasing trend reported on ENT problems.

The analysis of weight details of female children reveals that average weight/height continue to be significantly lower than the standard weight and height in almost all the age categories of female children and this trend is continuing in all the 3 years of survey. The age group of 15 to 18 has average height and weight (both male and female children) significantly lower than the Indian standard. The average height, weight and BMI of the children under study are also lower than the WHO standard.

This study identifies the transitional pattern in both height and weight of schoolchildren in suburb of age group between 5 to 18 years over a period of 3 years. The major health issues of the children mostly contributed by unhealthy life style and polluted urban life. Both male and female children show the trend of double-burden of underweight and obesity that prevail in urban area.

Keywords: Nutrition, obesity, underweight
