

Self-reported Morbidity as a Sensitive Indicator of Variation in Anthropometry and Body Composition among Urban Slum Dwelling Adult Males in West Bengal, India

Arpita Mistri¹ and Raja Chakraborty^{2*}

¹*Department of Anthropology, Narasinha Dutt College, Howrah, West Bengal, India*

²*Department of Anthropology, Dinabandhu Mahavidyalaya, Bongaon, West Bengal, India*

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ABSTRACT Self-reported morbidity (SRM) was positively associated with social cultural backwardness and with mortality in demographic studies. Its usefulness in assessing health status was criticized to be biased by subjectivity. This study assessed its association with anthropometric profile, an objective marker of health status. This cross-sectional study included 474 slum dwelling adult men. Height, weight and skin folds were measured. Body mass index, percent body fat, fat mass, fat mass index, fat-free mass, fat free mass index were computed. Morbidity was recorded as self-reported incidence of illness during the last month and in the previous year excluding the last month. All anthropometric measures, except height, and all body composition variables, except fat-free mass, showed the lowest values in repeated illness group and the highest values in the group reporting no illness. To conclude, SRM was strongly associated with anthropometry and body composition and thus with the health status.