

Assessment of Nutritional Status among Muslim Adolescents of Deganga, North 24 Parganas, West Bengal

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ABSTRACT The purpose of this study was to examine the age and sex differences in nutritional status based on new age and sex specific international BMI cut-off points, among Muslim adolescents of North 24 Parganas, West Bengal. One thousand and sixty eight (1068) Bengali speaking Muslim school boys (n=522) and girls (n=546) aged 10-17 years participated in this study. The overall (combined age and sex) frequency of undernutrition was 54.8 percent. The frequencies (combined age) of undernutrition among boys and girls were 58.04 percent and 51.65 percent respectively. The rates of undernutrition of boys varied between 35.0 percent among 16 years old to 72.7 percent at age 13 years. The rates of undernutrition of girls varied between 35.7 percent among 15 years old to 71.2 percent at age 11 years. Significant age difference was observed in mean height, weight and BMI for boys (height: $F=234.37$, $p<0.05$, weight: $F=145.36$, $p<0.05$ and BMI: $F=27.47$, $p<0.05$) and as well as girls (height: $F=163.40$, $p<0.05$, weight: $F=107.82$, $p<0.05$ and BMI: $F=39.74$, $p<0.05$). There was significant age differences (boys, chi square= 62.80, $p = 0.000$, girls, Chi-square = 76.21, $p = 0.000$) in nutritional status based on BMI of studied children. In general, this study provided evidence that the Bengalee Muslim adolescents had very high rates of undernutrition. Most of the earlier Indian studies showed lower prevalence than present study.