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PRINT: ISSN 0972-0073 ONLINE: ISSN 2456-6802

Anthropologist, 14(2): 239-243 (2012)

DOI: 10.31901/24566802.2012/14.03.07

Assessment of Overweight and Obesity According to Body Mass Index among College-Going Girls and Boys of Urban and Rural Background of District Gurdaspur, Punjab

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KEYWORDS Overweight. Obesity. BMI. College Students. Urban. Rural

ABSTRACT The present study was undertaken on 710 college students, with 377 subjects from urban and 333 from rural background, including 407 boys (194 urban; 213 rural) and 303 girls (183 urban; 120 rural) belonging to middle class and lower middle class economic strata. For assessment of nutritional status, measurements of height and weight were taken for each subject to calculate body mass index (BMI). According to latest BMI criteria, 57.25 percent of boys maintained normal nutritional status compared to 54.13 percent of girls who were significantly underweight while boys were significantly obese to level-I. A larger number of college-going individuals (i.e. boys and girls clubbed together) of rural area (57.36 percent) were normal compared to urban ones (54.64 percent), while a higher number of urban boys were overweight (12.73 percent) and significantly obese to level-I (8.75 percent) and level-II (1.86 percent). A comparison among urban and rural boys indicated that a higher percentage of urban boys was significantly obese to level-I (13.40 percent) whereas urban girls were significantly overweight (12.02 percent) compared to rural girls. Analysis of the data based upon the latest WHO standards recognizes more of the subjects as overweight and obese, which otherwise were categorized as normal when previous standards were taken into consideration.