

Assessment of Nutritional Status by Anthropometric Indices in Santal Tribal Children

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ABSTRACT An ethnic based cross-sectional study was undertaken to determine the rate of stunting, underweight and wasting using new anthropometric indices (stunting index, underweight index and wasting index) with respect to the overall undernutrition among the Santal children. A total of 251 (116 boys and 135 girls) aged 2-6 years were measured. Three commonly undernutrition indicators among children, that is, stunting (low height-for-age), underweight (low weight-for-age) and wasting (low weight-for-height) and new composite index, namely Composite Index of Anthropometric failure (CIAF) were used to evaluate the nutritional status. Present data was also compared with the other studies using CIAF. Among the studied Santal children, 26.3 % (stunted), 38.2 % (underweight), 12.7 % (wasted) and 43.4 % were CIAF. The underweight index showed a higher rate (0.881) followed by stunting index (0.606) then wasting index (0.294) out of the overall undernutrition. Other studies also validate that there were more underweight children than stunted and wasted. Supportive health and nutrition promotional programs can be formulated based on the findings of the new anthropometric indices with the ultimate objective to enhance the childhood undernutrition (particularly underweight) in all population of India.