

Adult Santal Males from Orissa and West Bengal: Comparison of Their Anthropometric Profile and Chronic Energy Deficiency

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ABSTRACT This study was undertaken among adult (aged > 18 years) male Santals of Orissa and West Bengal, to compare their anthropometric profile and the prevalence of chronic energy deficiency (CED), based on body mass index (BMI). Santals of Jhargram, Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal and Ananadapur, Keonjhar, Orissa were studied. Anthropometric measurements including height, weight and mid upper arm circumference (MUAC) were measured using standard protocol. The BMI was derived from height and weight. Internationally recommended BMI cut-off points were utilized to evaluate nutritional status. Results showed that there were significant differences between the means of some anthropometric characteristics of the two populations. The extent of CED (BMI < 18.5) was found to be high in both populations (Orissa = 26.2%; West Bengal = 31.5%). Using the World Health Organization criterion the prevalence of CED was high and the situation was serious in both populations. In conclusion, this study provided evidence that the nutritional status of adult Santals, in both Orissa as well as West Bengal, was not satisfactory. Immediate appropriate nutritional intervention programs are needed for implementation among Santals of both regions.