

Anthropometric Characteristics and Chronic Energy Deficiency of the Mankidias - A PTG of Northern Odisha, India

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ABSTRACT The present paper is an endeavor to focus on the socio-economic profile and anthropometric characteristics of the Mankidias, a semi-nomadic, particularly vulnerable tribe of Mayurbhanj District of Northern Odisha. The study includes 136 married women (≥ 15 years) and 124 adult men aged above 20 years. The subjects were also interviewed to collect data on their socio-economic profile. Anthropometric measurements including height and weight were measured using standard protocol. Body Mass Index (BMI) was calculated and used as a measure of nutritional status. The study depicts the low socio-economic status of the tribe in terms of low literacy and household income. Further the extent of under-nutrition ($\text{BMI} < 18.5 \text{ kg/m}^2$) was also found to be very high among both the males and the females. However, the frequency of under-nutrition or higher rate of chronic energy deficiency (CED), that is $\text{BMI} < 18.5 \text{ kg/m}^2$ is marked among the females. According to the WHO classification of public health problem of low BMI, the prevalence of CED was found to be very high ($\geq 40\%$) in both the males (48.4%) and females (59.5%) of this tribe indicating a critical situation. Since the socio-economic characteristics and nutritional status of the Mankidia tribe is indigent, it is indispensable that the nutritional status of the tribe should be improved by enhancing the socio-economic status through improved education and employment opportunities and appropriate nutritional interventional programs to reduce the prevalence of CED.