

## Preface

Indigenous people constitute a sizeable portion of the world's total population. They are found in every continent of the globe and are characterized by their unique food habits and social customs. They inhabit in regions having different ecological settings compared to the so-called "mainstream" or non-indigenous populations. In general, many indigenous people are economically deprived and live in disadvantageous conditions. Thus, they are faced with unique biological and social problems related to health and nutrition. This Special Volume attempts to highlight some of the health and nutritional problems of tribal populations and is divided into two sections. The first section deals with health and health care while the second section highlights problems dealing with ecology, growth and nutrition.

In the first chapter, Puoane and Tsolekile highlight the challenges faced by the urban black South Africans in the prevention of non-communicable diseases. In Chapter 2, Jamieson and Koopu discuss child use of dental services and receipt of dental care among Maoris of New Zealand. Khongsdier's paper deals with the increasing urbanization in tribal states of North-east India and its implications for the prevalence of chronic diseases. Mallikharjuna Rao's article evaluates the utilization of reproductive and child health services in tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh. Vincent investigates the concept of "Muti" or the killing with the purpose of harvesting body parts for use as traditional medicine in South

Africa. Bhakat and Sen highlight the ethno-medicinal plant conservation through sacred groves among Lodhas. The last chapter in this section by Sarkar and Mukhopadhyay elucidates age trends in blood pressures and obesity among the urban Bhutias of Sikkim.

The first paper in the second section by Khor and Shariff deals with the ecology of health and nutrition of Orang Asli women and children in peninsular Malaysia. Thereafter, Chakroborty et al. report a comparative study of physical growth and nutritional status in Santal children of Ghatsila and Bolpur. Bisai and Bose review the status of body mass index and chronic energy deficiency among adult tribal populations of West Bengal. Chakrabarty et al. highlight the problem of chronic energy deficiency among tribal communities of Orissa. The next chapter by Bisai et al. investigates sexual dimorphism and age variations in anthropometry, body composition and nutritional status among Kora Mudi tribals of Bankura district. The last article by Osei and Hamer discusses the relation between zinc nutrition and tribal health in India.

I hope that the articles in this Special Volume would be of interest to researchers in the field of anthropology, epidemiology, nutrition and all those interested in health care of indigenous populations. I must also convey my grateful thanks to the Managing Editor of this journal for all the help and assistance provided to me in preparation of this Special Volume.

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