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Nutritional Status of Women and Children in the Rural-Urban Interface of Bangalore

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Abstract

Dual burden malnutrition continues to be a major public health concern in India. Determination of forms of malnutrition clusters is important for the development of appropriate interventions. The study investigated nutritional status of women and children in the rural-urban interface of Bengaluru. A total of 300 middle income families spread across rural, transition and urban regions of north and south transects of Bengaluru was selected by purposive random sampling. Nutritional status of women respondents and children in the family were assessed by comparing the somatic measurements (height, weight, mid upper arm circumference) and their indices (Body Mass Index, Waist Hip Ratio) with standards. According to Body Mass Index the majority (63%) of women were overweight or obese across the rural-urban gradient. Though there was increase in per cent overweight and obese women from rural to urban it was statistically non-significant. Similar trend was also observed for Waist Hip Ratio classification of women. When body weight is considered, among children 52.1 per cent were below 90 per cent of IAP (Indian Academy of Paediatrics) standard in rural, followed by 51.6 per cent in transition and 40 per cent in urban. Interestingly in urban 35.3 per cent of children were above 100 per cent standard. The per cent children with height meeting above 100 per cent of standard was almost equal in all the gradients. It is noteworthy that children falling below 90 per cent of standards were more in transition (22.6%), followed by rural (16.7%) and urban (15.3%). MUAC an indicator of muscle mass was less than 90 per cent IAP standards in majority of the children irrespective of gradients. In all, the anthropometric measurements compared with standards indicated maximum percent of rural children to meet less than 90 per cent standards compared to transition and urban. Maximum per cent of underweight children were in rural (25.5%), whereas over weight were more in urban (14.3%). These findings determine pattern of malnutrition influenced by growing urbanisation in Bengaluru on surrounding rural localities with respect to nutritional status of women and children.

Keywords: BMI, children, somatic measurements, women