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Prevalence of obesity in correlation with physical activity among the school students of Pokhara, Nepal

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Obesity is an emerging major public health problem throughout the world and its prevalence has largely increased over the last decade in both developed and developing countries. Only few studies addressing obesity is available in Nepal. While this global epidemic is well described in the adult population, not much data is available regarding the prevalence of overweight/obesity in children or adolescents amongst developing countries. Therefore the present study was to obtain prevalence of obesity in school children and to analyze the relationship of obesity with physical activity of the students. Anthropometric data was collected from 100 students. Physical activity of the students was assessed with the help of a set of questionnaires. The results of this study showed that the obese/overweight subjects had a greater BMI. Of the total population 3% was obese while 19% was overweight. The prevalence rates of overweight and obesity in girls were higher than in boys. Of our sample, 31% were found to be underweight. Most of the obese/overweight children belonged to the private schools, while majority of the underweight belonged in government school. The association of different types of physical activities (sports, domestic help and motor transportation) with BMI was found to be significant. Thus, we can say that obesity and under nutrition co-exist in Nepalese school-children. This study showed the higher rates of underweight children, even though Nepalese population is starting to have worrisome rates of overweight. There is a great need for information on nutritional status and physical activity in school-age children.

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