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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



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KNOWLEDGE ON BODY MASS INDEX AND ITS IMPACT ON HEALTH AMONG UNDERGRADUATES IN THE EASTERN UNIVERSITY, SRI LANKA

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Background: Obesity has become a major health issue with high prevalence in all over the world. During last two decades three folds increase of obesity was recorded. It's a major modifiable risk factor for many non-communicable diseases. Body Mass Index (BMI) analysis is the accepted tool to monitor obesity and it has strong association with health risk and mortality across population.

Objective: To evaluate the knowledge on BMI and its impact on health among undergraduates in Eastern University, Sri Lanka.

Methods: Descriptive cross sectional study was carried out among 399 students in EUSL except Trinco Campus through online questionnaire survey. Socio-demographic information, knowledge on BMI, life style factors and BMI related medical complications were obtained through the survey to find the relation between knowledge on BMI, impact of BMI and socio demographic factors.

Results: Among the study population, 57.4% have known about BMI. Of those who knew about BMI, 59.82% were females and 40.17% males. There were no significant association between calculated BMI of the participant and their knowledge on BMI ($p=0.254$). Among those who know about BMI, only 65.93% participants have known about how to calculate BMI. Significant associations between alcohol consumption ($p=0.001$), Frequency of alcohol consumption ($p=0.00$), number of packs of cigarette smoking ($p=0.005$), Monthly family income ($p =0.01$), Frequency of meal ($p =0.042$), Time spent on TV and Computer ($p =0.000$), Gastro-oesophageal reflux disease ($p =0.000$), male gender ($p =0.006$) and calculated BMI were found in this study.

Conclusion: Awareness on BMI and favourable lifestyle practices are necessary to the university students to lead a healthy life.

Keywords: BMI, Non-communicable diseases, Prevalence, Obesity