

## THE OBESITY LEVEL AND ABDOMINAL FAT AMONG A RURAL TAMIL SCHOOL STUDENTS IN MALAYSIA

GUNATHEVAN ELUMALAI, DINESH CHANDRAMOHAN, MOHANSUNDAR SANKARAVEL,  
NORKHALID SALIMIN & IZWAN SHAHRIL

Sultan Idris Education University

### ABSTRACT

Diseases caused by body fat accretion are alarming among Malaysian population. This study aims to determine the level of obesity (BMI) and abdominal fat among 210 students, ten to twelve years old (93 boys and 117 girls) from Vagesar Primary school, a rural Tamil School, in Malaysia. This ex post facto study was conducted using Omron Karada Scan HBF-375 Body Composition Monitor with Scale and Waist to Hip Ratio (WHR) protocol to measure abdominal fat. Research outcome showed that 46 boys (49.5%) and 72 girls (61.5%) are prone to the risk of cardiovascular diseases based on the level of abdominal fat using WHO (1998), Asian norm. However, it is clear from the result, that about 102 students (49 boys and 53 girls) 48%, were underweight according to WHO (2004) Asian BMI norm. This describes an unfavourable environment in which the corresponding respondents could possibly suffer from deficiency in minerals and vitamins. Therefore, the rural Tamil school students must be offered sufficient awareness on issues of body fat accretion and deficiency in nutrition. Based on these study, respondents especially female students needs to take preventive measures to reduce abdominal fat, in addition to control of diet and at the same time increase physical activities. Appropriate action must be taken by the teachers and parents to ensure the quality of life with proper nutrients to avoid any cardiovascular diseases in feature.

**KEYWORDS:** Abdominal Fat, Cardiovascular Diseases, Nutrition, Obesity & Underweight

