



HUMAN GROWTH AND NUTRITION

A BIOCULTURAL SYNTHESIS

Rajesh K. Gautam
PK Patra

Human Growth and Nutrition: A Biocultural Synthesis

**Rajesh K. Gautam
and
Prasanna K. Patra**



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Age at Puberty and Nutritional Status: A Comparative Study among Adult Females of two Different Ecological Zones

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Abstract

Age at menarche is a sign of puberty among women. It is determined by bio-social characteristics, viz. socio-economic condition, culture, ecology etc. whereas body mass index (BMI) is a scale to assess the level of nutrition. In the present study women of different ecological setup as well as culture were studied for their onset of age at menarche and level of nutrition. Cross-sectional data was gathered on a total of 446 women aged 18-60 years from six different endogamous groups of two ecological zones. The mean age at menarche varies from 13.66 years among Brahmins of Madhya Pradesh to 16.23 years among the Rajput of Uttarakhand; Similarly, variation in mean BMI ranging between 18.56 Kg/m² and 20.71 Kg/m² among these women. It was found that altitude is one of the determinants of the age at menarche. Similarly, socio-economic statuses also have impact on puberty of children. On the basis of present study it can be postulated that the nutritional status of Indian women is no doubt improved during last two decades. But still large numbers of women are malnourished especially in deprived section of the societies and require special attention.