

Body Mass Index of University Students and Gender Differential: A Survey at the Faculty of Technology, University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka

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Abstract

Calculating the Body mass index (BMI) can raise awareness among undergraduates about the importance of maintaining a healthy weight. It can be helpful in understanding the relationship between their weight and overall health, encouraging them to adopt healthy habits and instrumental in assisting them make informed choices about their lifestyles. The study aimed at determining the relationship between BMI and gender differentiation, academic performance, activity level, socioeconomic factors, health conditions, and age in university students at the Faculty of Technology, University of Ruhuna. A structured questionnaire was delivered using both online and physical methods. Among 250 students that completed the survey, 138 respondents (55.2%) were female and 112 (44.8%) were male. The BMI was calculated based on students' weight and height, while academic performance was determined by students' cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA). According to the results of the analysis, there was a significant difference ($p=0.020$) between BMI and gender and also between BMI and age ($p=0.034$). There is a significant association between BMI with that of both gender and age ($p<0.05$). According to the results obtained from the survey there is no any significant difference between BMI and ($p=0.201$) academic performance, ($p=0.178$) activity level, health conditions ($p=0.150$) and socioeconomic factors ($p=0.891$). These findings infer the importance of studying BMI and associated factors and future research should be conducted in the university level.

Keywords: *BMI, Gender, Socioeconomic, Academic-performance, Health Condition*