



## **A comparative study of physical fitness among urban & rural higher secondary boys: Time to reconsider sports policy**

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### **Abstract**

Higher secondary students from urban & rural background have different fitness level & health conditions. Their socio economic background varies from urban to rural areas & THEIR learning skills also differ based on these health disparities. Studies are being conducted into the study of physical fitness among higher secondary going students but this paper addressed the issue linked with degrees of physical and mental development variation found in rural and urban higher secondary students at higher secondary level. The health issues of rural higher secondary boys is very discernible because most of the drop out in higher secondary are due to health issues combined with economic problems. This paper examine the health disparities among urban rural higher secondary boys and probe into the issues linked with rural environmental impact on health.

**Keywords:** Physical fitness, variations in physical development, nutritional intake, growth comparison, rural environmental impact on health

### **Introduction**

There have been several studies conducted on the degrees of development of higher secondary students both rural & urban. There have been several discerning revelations in their total physical growth & academic growth. Rural student body fitness, health determinants, nutrition levels & digestive capacities are is different from urban students in terms of their

1. Digestive capacity
2. Food intake
3. Imbalance in mental growth quotient
4. Nutritional intake variations
5. Physical growth structure
6. Prospective growth
7. Sustenance power
8. Abdominal working
9. Difference in mean weight & height

### **Health problems of rural students**

Rural higher secondary youth suffer from following health & nutritional issues

1. Abdominal virus syndrome
2. Anemia
3. Abnormal eating habits
4. Chlorine deficiency
5. Dental problems due to excessive tobacco chewing
6. Excessive constipation
7. Eye problems, glaucoma, conjunctivitis
8. Indigestion & digestive disorders
9. Iodine insufficiency
10. Neurological symptoms
11. Behavioral problems – slow learning, infirmity complex
12. Loss of memory, slow academic Recalling.

### **Environmental impact on health**

Rural higher secondary students hail from different environments where the environment is very precarious.

These students

1. Lack of food
2. Lack of unsullied food
3. Lack of good ventilation at residential homes
4. Lack of Pure drinking water at home & at higher secondary
5. Lack of sanitation facilities at home & at higher secondary
6. Low standard of living
7. Mental stress problems due to frustration caused by unemployment & under employment
8. Lack of knowledge about clear
9. Respiratory issues
10. Lack of knowledge about constant Sore throat, cough & cold
11. Lack of usage of sanitizers & hand washers
12. Lack of knowledge about other epidemics
13. Lack of awareness about health nutrition
14. Lack of knowledge about bleeding gums, stinking teeth, swelling roots.

### **Problems of Rural Health**

Rural youth are not able to take part in sporting events due to economic & socio cultural problems. They choose to opt out for livelihood earning instead of gaining sport skills. Their deteriorates as they are always tend to work in dangerous professions. Working in Mining, Quarrying, Earth digging for drainage / Tele communication / well purposes, Tree felling/ sawing /cutting industries, mud brick making, mud smearing, plastering, pasting, cement brick making, demolition work, coir/ carpeting/ matting/ stone cutting/ leathering/ stuffing.

### **Shortcomings**

The rural youth are losing their health because of all these unsafe professions & they have little time to even think of taking part in any sporting activity. There are several other

shortcomings.

1. The increasing pressure of rural population,
2. Increasing governmental attention to alleviate urban youth at the cost of rural youth,
3. Rural migration to urban centers in search of jobs,
4. Deviation of rural human resources to urban centers through big governmental building projects. (Samantha . A. - Mental Health in Urban & Rural Adolescents 2014).

Because of these problems rural youth are becoming a prey to malnutrition. To avoid desperation & unemployment they offer themselves in cheap, edgy, restless, manual labor at the cost of their health in urban centers & they also become victims of sexually transmitted diseases. (Kishore Choudhary. (2011), Effect of Globalization on Rural Entrepreneurship in India).

1. Even though the rural youth identify their health problems they hesitate to visit a doctor nearby fearing high cost of medicinal drugs.
2. Due to poor literacy rates they often ignore nutritional values of the food they are consuming
3. They remain unspoken about their endemic diseases fearing caste dilemmas & socio cultural Exclusion.
4. The youth are often voiceless in a community gathering as their participation is neglected due to their inexperience. Their initiatives to involve are often laughed at & mock by elders.
5. Their failure in sporting activity / or their failure in organizing a sporting event, or their failure to fund raising for a sporting cause is constantly teased & ridiculed.

### **Bridging the gap**

There have been several propositions to bridge the gap. Major disparities in infrastructure between rural & urban students should be filled one of the most important factors shaping learning environment is the engagement of teachers and pupils. According to the study, teachers and principals in schools & higher secondaries serving socially disadvantaged students tend to report lower levels of pupil motivation and more behavioral problems. (Shalini C. N. & Others - Comparison Nutritional Status Rural & Urban Schools Students 2014) <sup>[3]</sup>. There is an urgent need to direct more resources towards higher secondary's serving underprivileged communities such as providing midday meals. Pure drinking water, healthy surroundings, time for physical fitness activities

1. Both rural & urban higher secondary students need following regular physical activity such as, running, jumping, cycling, brisk walking, etc.
2. Physical fitness activities such as controlling body weight, regulating respiratory systems, modifiable food intake patterns etc are be reformulated with orientation of rural higher secondary boys Reducing the risk of metabolic syndrome, Reducing risk of cardiovascular syndrome Reducing the risk of Type 2 diabetes strengthen bones & muscles Reducing the risk of heart diseases should be attended at an early stage.

### **Conclusion**

Thus there have been several disparities in rural urban physical fitness parameters. The root cause for declining attendance drop out ratio, learning progress, physical growth disparity but they can be overcome by an integrated health

policy linked equitable by public private partnerships to ameliorate the constant health issues. Higher secondary's & Higher education institutions can become a firm ground for avoiding all disparities & helps to build the stable future for rural /urban students.

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