

SUMMARY

This study was undertaken with the object of obtaining valid data on bio-physical characteristics of a university population at entry, and relate these findings to their nutritional status. The survey included the collection of data related to their socio-economic background and the determination of the prevalence of defects and abnormalities of organ systems.

The bio-physical characteristics were assessed and analysed according to the four Faculties of Medicine, Science, Law and Arts and by their socio-economic background.

Anthropometric data, clinical examination, haemoglobin concentration in the blood and age of menarche were considered the important criteria in the determination of nutritional status.

Analysis of results showed that many problems associated with undernutrition existed among this population.

Using the same criteria of assessment, it was seen that the medical students who were from a higher socio-economic background had a better nutritional status than students from the other faculties, the arts students being worse affected.

Age at menarche was seen to be related to the socio-economic status of the student by the criteria adopted in this study.

The most common clinical signs were dental caries, goitre and pallor. Caries was uniformly distributed in the population. Goitre was related to area of residence.