

## The relationship between the body mass index and physical activity level among Law Faculty students at the University of Colombo

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Body mass index (BMI) is widely recognized as an important indicator of overall health, particularly among university students. It may be influenced by lifestyle factors such as physical activity level and dietary habits. This study aimed to assess the relationship between BMI and physical activity level among Law Faculty students at the University of Colombo. A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted at the Faculty of Law, University of Colombo, using a sample of 257 undergraduate students aged 20-26 years. Weight and height measurements were taken using standard measuring tools to determine their BMI. BMI was divided into four categories according to the Asia-Pacific guidelines: underweight, normal weight, overweight, and obese. Physical activity level of the participants was assessed using the International Physical Activity Questionnaire-Short Form (IPAQ-SF). Descriptive statistics and the chi-square test were used for data analysis using SPSS version 22. The sample comprised 57 (22.2%) males and 200 (77.8%) females, with a mean age of 22.79 ( $\pm 1.55$ ) years. Most participants were in the normal weight BMI category (61.4%), and the least number of students were categorized as obese (1.2%). The majority of participants (60.3%) reported a moderate level of physical activity, whereas only 18.2% reported high physical activity levels. A significant relationship was found between the BMI category and physical activity level ( $p=0.001$ ) among Law Faculty students at the University of Colombo. Results revealed that the majority of the Law Faculty students who participated in this study maintain healthy body weights and moderate physical activity levels. The results confirm that physical activity level was associated with BMI among Law Faculty students at the University of Colombo, indicating that students who are more physically active tend to maintain healthier body weights. Therefore, strategies for enhancing physical activity levels should be advocated for maintaining a healthy BMI.

**Keywords:** *Body mass index, Physical activity level, University students, Law*