The Daily Telegraph (London)

**March** 9, 2016 Wednesday   
Edition 1;   
National Edition

Tall or slim? You will probably earn more ...;   
Being a 6ft man or slender woman can add thousands on to your pay packet over a lifetime, shows study  
  
**BYLINE:** Sarah Knapton  
  
**SECTION:** NEWS; Pg. 4  
  
**LENGTH:** 435 words

IN THE genetic lottery, slender women and tall men really do seem to have hit the jackpot, after a huge study found that **height** and **weight** are critical to future earnings.

For every three inches taller a man is, he will earn on average £1,500 a year more. Likewise every extra stone costs a woman £1,500 a year.

It means that a 6ft man is likely to earn an extra £70,000 over a working lifetime, compared to a colleague who is 5ft 9in. An **overweight** woman in contrast could earn £100,000 less over a lifetime in comparison with a trim female.

Crucially, the findings are not based on education or childhood deprivation which are already known to affect earnings in later life.

Scientists at Exeter University looked purely at the genetic information provided by nearly 120,000 people in the UK biobank and compared it to their salaries. Men who had taller genes and women who had slender genes consistently did better in life, regardless of their upbringing.

It is the first study that has managed to tease apart the effects of a poor start in life from inherited characteristics.

It was previously thought that people who fared worse in life were short because they came from a deprived background and, therefore, had worse nutrition which stunted their growth and increased their risk of obesity.

It now appears that **height** and **weight** are actually driving future success or failure.

"This is the best available evidence to indicate that your **height** or **weight** can directly influence your earnings and other **socioeconomic** factors throughout your life," said Professor Tim Frayling, of the University of Exeter Medical School.

"Although we knew there was a strong association, most people assumed that shorter **height** and higher **BMI** were a consequence of poorer nutrition and chances in life.

"Now we have shown that there is an effect in the other direction as well - shorter **height** and higher**BMI** can actually lead to lower income and other lifestyle measures. There is something about being a bit shorter or heavier that can actually influence your chance in life."

The researchers cannot be sure what drives the correlation, but speculate that shorter men and**overweight** women are more likely to suffer from low self-esteem or depression than their taller, slimmer counterparts. Likewise, it could be that employers prefer taller men. Dr Jessica Tyrrell, lead author on the study, said: "This is the strongest evidence to date that there's something about being shorter as a man and having a higher **BMI** as a woman that leads to being less well-off financially."

The research was published in the British Medical Journal.

**LANGUAGE:** ENGLISH