**Short men, overweight women earn less, says study**

* **PTI, London**

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Short men and overweight women have much more to deal with than just low confidence. Scientists from the University of Exeter in the UK have concluded that a shorter man or a more overweight woman leads to lower chances in life, including a lower income. The team used genetics to show that shorter height in men or higher body mass index (BMI) -- a measure of weight for a given height -- in women leads to reduced chances in life, including income.

Using data from 120,000 participants in the UK Biobank (aged between 40 and 70) for whom genetic information was available, researchers studied 400 genetic variants that are associated with height and 70 associated with body mass index. They used these genetic variants, together with actual height and weight, to ask whether or not shorter stature or higher BMI could lead to lower chances in life -- as measured by information the participants provided about their lives.

The findings showed if a man was 7.5 centimetres shorter for no other reason than his genetics, this would lead him to have an income 1,500 Pounds per year less than his taller counterpart. If a woman was a stone heavier (6.3 kg) for no other reason than her genetics, this would lead her to have an income 1,500 Pounds (Rs 1,43,391) less per year than a comparable woman of the same height who was a stone lighter.

“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 Tim Frayling from University of Exeter. “Because we used genetics and 120,000 people, 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,” said Jessica Tyrrell from University of Exeter. The findings were published in the BMJ