Adult Male Stature as an Economic Indicator
In Northern Jordan

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Abstract

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The main aim of this study is to find out the relationship between the economical development and the change in stature in Jordan and Palestine during the period from 1928 to 1977. This study has been carried out on a sample of 401 male adult subjects- (age range 20-75) in the northern part of Jordan. The sample included officials, lecturers, students, workers and drivers. It also included patients, visitors and officials at Princess Basma Hospital. The sample was divided into ten phases covering the period from 1928 to 1977. The results show that there is a 6cm. increase in stature of Jordanians. (166.43 - 172.65). This increase is due to the economical development and the improvement of health care services.

In discussing the sample according to the place of birth, either in Jordan or Palestine, the results show that there is no significant difference. However, there is a significant difference between those who were born in the Arabian Gulf States and those who were born in Jordan or Palestine, the average stature of those who were born in the Gulf was 175.21cm, while it was 172.17cm. for those who were not born in the Gulf stats. The results also show
that there is no important difference found when applying the study according to the number of birth in the family.

According to the size of families, three sorts of families were discussed; small ones (1-5 persons), moderate (5-10 persons) big families (10 or more). The results show an increase in the average height of those who live in small families (173.7cm).

This study divided the sample of careers and occupations into two groups. The first included officials such as clerks, teachers, lecturers... and the second included craftsmen and free jobs such as workers, chefs and drivers. The results of the study show an increase in the stature of the first group. The average of the first group was 171.83, while it was 169.77 for the second.

This study proves that serious diseases during childhood have an influence on stature. The results show that there is an increase in the stature of the persons who were not exposed to serious diseases during their childhood. It was 171cm for those who were not exposed to serious diseases and 168.35 for those who were exposed. Those who were born to farmers fathers and live a farming life had shorter stature than those who were not born to farmers' father.

It is obvious that this study shows that there is an increase in the stature of the Jordanians living in the north of Jordan. This increase depends mainly on economical factors. The higher the income, the higher is the stature. This means that when a person is wealthy, his stature will be higher. Moreover, the more urbanized a person is, the higher his stature will be, particularly if he was not exposed to illness. The average height of stature for the whole sample was 170.8cm.