Practical Activity
Heights and Well-Being
Economic History
Suggested citation


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CONVOCATORIA PARA EL IMPULSO Y LA CONSOLIDACIÓN DE PROYECTOS DE DOCENCIA BILINGÜE DURANTE EL CURSO 2017/2018 (Resolución Rectoral 787/2017, de 26 de julio de 2017)
Pre-Task → Task Preparation → Task Realization → Post Task
• Task 1

• Material:

  
Other Materials:

  

  
• Technique:
  • Team Work (please write down all your peers’ names!)
• Delivery Method:
  • One assignment by group.
Who was ROBERT FOGEL?

Nobel Prize in Economy (1993) (& Douglass C. North)

Pioneer in applying economic theory and statistic techniques to Economic History (Cliometrics).

Main contributions:

1. The impact of railroads and American economic growth.
2. On Slavery and American economic growth (and social development).
3. Demography and standards of living. (*)
Assumption-fact:

Adult height reflects (net) nutrition in childhood and adolescence.

“Industrizalization Puzzle”:

Industrialization increased GDP (GDP per capita) BUT living standards decreased the population.

Evidence:

Height records declined during the industrialization

Explanation:
Explaination:

Physical conditions of the population during the IR were worse than those of the preceding generations.

1. Unhealthy work places
2. Hard work
3. Adulterated food
4. Overcrowded rooms in the cities
Some scholars disagree with the mainstream.

- How it could be that higher economic development (GDP/capita) EQUATES TO lower biological standards?

- Reasons:
  1. The data was unrepresentative of the population.
  2. The data was biased.
  3. Contemporaries who collected data had specific aims (by no means to understand well-being)
Data collections from the 18th and 19th Centuries:

1. Young men in the army.
2. Slaves.
3. Criminals, offenders… imprisoned
4. Hospitalized patients.

Data collectors… not scholars who want to measure well-being:

1. Military recruiters
2. Prison officials
3. Slave traders
4. Hospital managers
5. School administrator
Task 2

1. Explain the concept “Industrialization puzzle” using the information in the article.

2. List some sources of heights in which the data were biased (the sample was unrepresentative of the population). Please, use the information in the article.

3. Explain why the mean height of US soldiers decreased in the 19th C while the US economy was growing.

4. Discuss with your peers some of your direct relatives’ heights (1st and 2nd degree of kinship). According to your observation, do you think that the new generation is taller than previous ones? (15-20 lines)
• Technique:
  • Team Work (please write down all your peers’ names!)

• Delivery Method:
  • One assignment by group.