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Tall tales: the curious connection between height and income

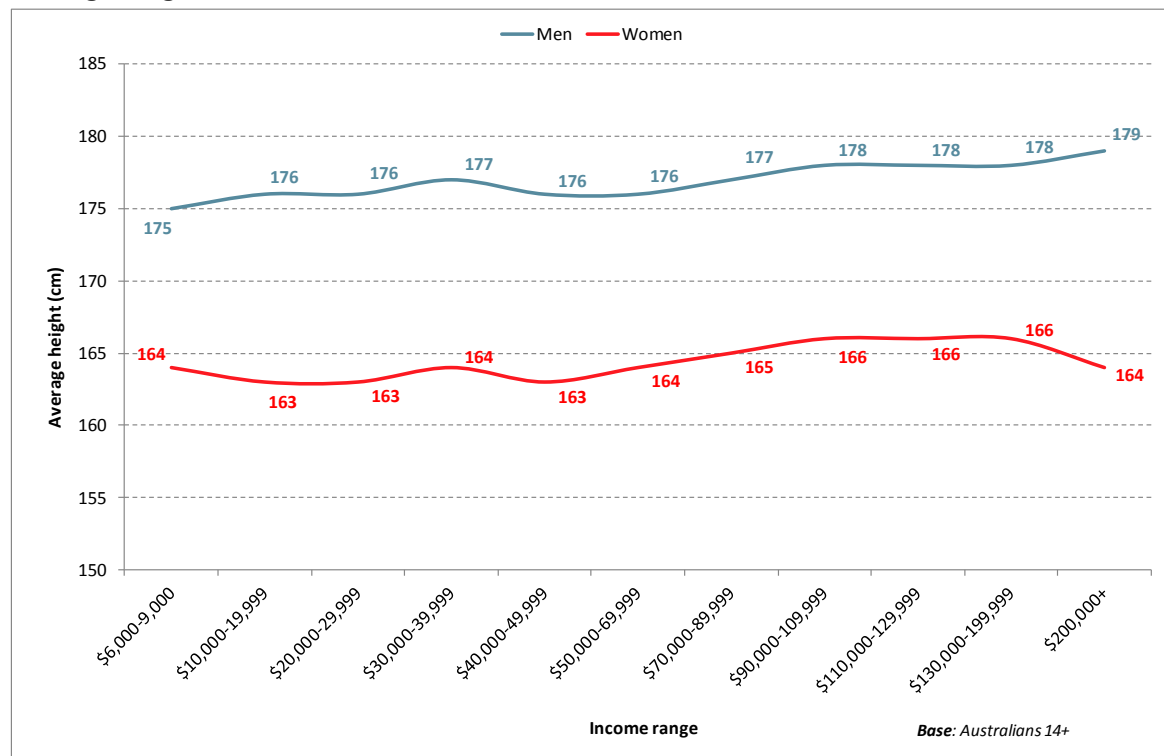
Like the old 'blondes have more fun' chestnut, the notion that tall people earn more money has got to be an urban myth, right? Well, no. The latest findings from Roy Morgan Research confirm that there does indeed appear to be a correlation between a person's height and their income, particularly where men are concerned.

As of June 2016, Roy Morgan data shows that the average height of Australians 14+ is 170cm (5'7"). Yet the average height of people who earn \$200,000 or more is 176cm (just over 5'9"), while the average height of those on incomes below \$30,000 is below the population average at 168cm (5'6").

This puzzling pattern is particularly striking among Aussie men. While the average height of Australian men is 176cm, men earning \$200,000+ tend to be taller, with an average height of 179cm (just under 5'11"). Meanwhile, those whose income is under \$30,000 are shorter, averaging 176cm.

As incomes rise past the \$50,000 mark, the average height of the men earning them inches up accordingly.

Average height of Australians on different incomes



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), July 2015-June 2016, n=14,956.

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Among Aussie women, the trend is not quite as clear cut, but can be seen for those with incomes between \$40,000 and \$200,000. While the average height of women earning \$40,000-\$49,999 is 163cm (5'4"), this creeps up to an average 166cm (just over 5'5") among those on incomes between \$110,000 and \$199,999.

Curiously, the average height of those on \$200,000 or more reverts to the female average: 164cm (just over 5'4").

Michele Levine, CEO, Roy Morgan Research, says:

"The theory that tall people earn higher incomes has been circulating for years, supported by studies showing that taller people are smarter, have better people skills and so on. Whether these are the reasons behind it or not, the latest data from Roy Morgan Research shows that there does seem to be a connection between height and income, particularly among men.

"Obviously, this is not a hard and fast rule – there are plenty of average-height (or shorter) men and women with above-average incomes – but it's striking enough to warrant further investigation. For example, Roy Morgan data reveals that Australian men and women of above-average height are more likely than those of average or shorter height to agree with the attitude statement, 'It is important that I have responsibility in my job.' So which came first: the attitude or the height?

"It is also worth noting, of course, that the height-income equation would also be subject to other factors. As we reported earlier this year, [gender parity is still lacking in Australia's workforce](#), and even a tall woman on a higher-than-average income may be earning less than her male counterpart.

"Containing deep data on employment, income, work attitudes and professions, plus a wealth of other key demographic and psychographic measures that combine to provide meaningful insights into Australian workers, Roy Morgan Single Source is an invaluable source for government and university departments striving to make the workforce a fairer and more transparent place."

For comments or more information about Roy Morgan Research's employment data, please contact:

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About Roy Morgan Research

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in Indonesia, the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years' experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
7,500	±1.1	±1.0	±0.7	±0.5
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2