

Human population – changes in survival



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I. Abstract

The purpose of this lab was to determine how changes in human mortality and survivorship have influenced population growth.

II. Introduction

People today are living longer than they did a hundred years ago. This can be contributed to the advances in modern medicine and lifestyle changes. We as a society are taking better care of our elderly. We have government funding to help those who cannot help themselves. Our society also promotes children and there is government funding to care for children whose mothers can barely afford to live. This mass population growth is seen by some people to be in line with the sustaining of the global environment. But how can we continue producing millions of children each year, and still support plant growth and clean air?

III. Materials and Methods

To find out the population growth of a certain area (namely my home town of Powell, Tennessee) I visited a local cemetery to record data from the headstones. The information I collected was sex and age at death. I then charted these findings to establish the number of male and female deaths during a certain century, and the average age of each at the time of death.

I also obtained local newspapers to record the deaths from the past two weeks. I then charted these with the same information.

IV. Results

After spending considerable time at the local cemetery, and looking through a couple of weekly papers, I took the information that I had recorded and formulated excel spreadsheets to show the results. These charts are included with this report.

V. Discussion

I found that there are varying ages of death in each date category, but for the most part, the ages increased considerably from century to century. This, to me, would be a sign of the technology progression that we have experienced and the modern medical discoveries to aid in the healing processes of some previously fatal diseases.

There are millions and millions of children born each year on the earth. Laws to control this growth are slow in coming and widely ignored. Also, we have placed a high value on life that we keep the elderly alive even past the time when they are coherent. I believe this is more a capitalist idea than a humane one.

VI. Conclusion

Until we can find some way to regulate the population surge that is going on, we are going to continue to feel its affects. This massive growth causes all kinds of environmental hazards as well as hardship for those born into poverty, with little means to better their life. I know that this may seem like a lot to ask of those who want to carry on some kind of heritage, but if we really think about it, what are we really passing on?

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