

The Pace of Life



Background

Some believe that individuals with a constant sense of time urgency (often called type-A behaviour) are more susceptible to heart disease than are more relaxed individuals. Some psychologists have investigated geographical areas and their relationship to the pace of life. They considered the relationship of city-wide heart disease rates and general measures of the pace of life in the city.

Data

For each region of the United States psychologists selected three large metropolitan areas, three medium size cities, and three smaller cities for a total of 36 cities. In each city they measured three indicators of the pace of life.

The variable **walk** is the walking speed of pedestrians over a distance of 20 metres during business hours

The variable **bank** is the average time a sample of bank clerks take to make change for two \$20 bills

The variable **talk** was obtained by recording responses of postal clerks explaining the difference in their mail service. The total number of syllables was then divided by the time of their response.

Researchers also obtained the age-adjusted death rates from heart disease for each city.

Source: R.V. Levine, "The Pace of Life", *American Scientist* 78 (1990): 450-59.

Variables

City = Name of city

Walk = Average walking speed of pedestrian

Bank = Average time taken for a bank clerk to give change

Talk = Average talking speed of postal clerk

Heart = Age adjusted death rates from heart disease.

Note: There are no units of measurement involved as all variables have been standardized.

Questions

How does the data support or dispute the belief that those with time urgency are more susceptible to heart disease?