

Are we slowly breeding our way to stupidity?

A study from Iceland is the latest to raise the prospect of a downwards spiral into imbecility...The scientists used a database of more than 100,000 Icelanders to see how dozens of [gene variants that affect educational attainment](#) appeared in the population over time. They found a shallow decline over the 65 year period, implying a downturn in the natural inclination to rack up qualifications.

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But the genes involved in education affected fertility too. Those who carried more “education genes” [tended to have fewer children than others](#). This led the scientists to propose that the genes had become rarer in the population because, for all their qualifications, better educated people had contributed less than others to the Icelandic gene pool.

Spending longer in education and the career opportunities that provides is not the sole reason that better educated people tend to start families later and have fewer children, the study suggests.

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But the effect is very small...[The] researchers estimate that it corresponds to a drop in IQ of about 0.04 points per decade...Nevertheless, Kari Stefansson, who led the study, believes that if the trend continued for centuries, the impact could be serious.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [Natural selection making ‘education genes’ rarer, says Icelandic study](#)