

Historical education levels and present-day non-cognitive skills

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the extent to which education levels in the 19th century have shaped current norms, which influence individuals' present-day non-cognitive skills and perceptions of life. Cross-country, individual-level data were compared with each country's average years of schooling in 1870. After controlling for various country-level and individual characteristics, the key findings were as follows: (1) people in countries with high historical education levels place importance on hard work, ambition, and education; (2) people in countries with high historical education levels tend to show perseverance and have a sense of responsibility.

JEL classification: I25; D83; Z13; N30

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