Long Term Orientation and Educational Performance

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Abstract

The paper explores the effect of long term orientation, the cultural value that “stands for the fostering of virtues oriented toward future rewards” (Hofstede et al., 2010), on educational performance. We use matched birth records and longitudinal student records from the Florida Department of Education to study the effect of long term orientation on behavioral and educational measures of performance for a large sample of first and second generation migrants born between 1992 and 2002. We find that migrants coming from countries with high long term orientation perform better in standardized test scores of mathematics and readings, have a higher graduation rates, they are also less likely to have disciplinary problems and to be truant from school. We attempt to explore the mechanisms of cultural transmission by looking at the relevance of the size of the community from the same country of origin and the importance of children’s socioeconomic background. The differential investment of parental time on educational activities and school choice are also studied. Our results are confirmed when we use data from the Program for International Student Assessment, containing information on a large sample of first and second generations immigrants in 37 different destination countries.