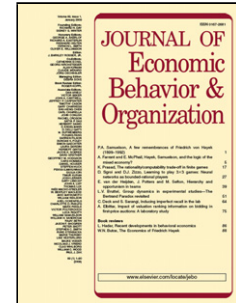


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The Role of Confidence and Noncognitive Skills for Post-Baccalaureate Academic and Labor Market Outcomes

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Highlights:

- We study the effect of self-confidence on MBA and earnings outcomes.
- Measures of noncognitive skills and confidence in verbal and quantitative skills are constructed.
- Noncognitive skills predicts men and women's future earnings.
- Confidence in quantitative skills matter positively for men.
- Confidence in verbal skills matter negatively, especially for women.

Abstract:

Increasingly researchers include information about noncognitive abilities in their analyses of similar people's educational choices and subsequent labor market outcomes. We contribute to this literature by considering the dual roles of confidence in one's abilities and noncognitive skills and characteristics in predicting several subsequent MBA program and employment outcomes among a sample of GMAT test takers, with a focus on identifying possible gender differences in these relationships. Self-reported noncognitive skills correlate similarly for men's and women's managerial, earnings and employment satisfaction outcomes. In contrast, though, distinct gender differences emerge regarding perceptions of one's mathematical and verbal ability—with confidence in quantitative ability especially associated with men's and confidence in verbal ability mainly associated with women's outcomes. Non-linearity analysis reveals that lower earnings are correlated with men who have low confidence in their quantitative ability and with women who have high confidence in their verbal ability.

Keywords: Confidence; Noncognitive Skills; Gender Differences; Human Capital Investments

JEL classification: J16; J24; J31; J44

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