
Educational processes may generate both cognitive —knowledge and skills— and non-cognitive —attitudes and expectations— results. The latter have been overlooked in the Economics of Education literature, despite their relevance in terms of individual and social development. The objective of this article is to test the hypothesis that these competencies act as mediators between the traditional explanatory factors included in the education production function and the cognitive outcomes. To do this, a Structural Equations Model (SEM) is estimated using PISA 2012 data for Argentina. Results favor the proposed hypothesis.

**Keywords**: Educational quality, educational achievement, non-cognitive competencies, Structural Equations Model (SEM), PISA.

**JEL**: I20, I21, I24, C31.