

Are genes more important than practice for excelling in games, sports, and academics?

[The] age-old debate: nature versus nurture, genetics versus effort. We've been having it long before we knew what DNA was...[T]he basic question still guides modern research—not nature versus nurture so much as just how *much* nature, and just how *much* nurture? [Florida State researchers] Anders Ericsson and Neil Charness had [published](#) a provocative paper arguing that...“Differences between expert and less accomplished performers reflect acquired knowledge and skills or physiological adaptations effected by training, with the only confirmed exception being height.”

If that's true, it means that the sky is the limit, especially if you're dealing with areas other than athletics, where length of bones can offer no competitive edge. Follow your dreams and, with enough training...you can reach them,

So how much did practice actually explain? In a [2014 meta-analysis](#) that looked specifically at the relationship between deliberate practice and performance in music, games like chess, sports, education, and other professions, [Michigan State psychologist] Zach Hambrick ...found ..[f]or some things, like games, practice explained about a quarter of variance in expertise. For music and sports, the explanatory power accounted for about a fifth. But for education...the effect ranged from small to tiny. For all of these professions, you obviously need to practice, but natural abilities matter more.

The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion and analysis. Read full, original post: [Practice Doesn't Make Perfect](#)