

## Genes linked with schooling does not mean they affect education directly

[I]n a study of almost 294,000 people, an international team led by [Daniel Benjamin](#), [David Cesarini](#), and [Philipp Koellinger](#) has [identified variants in 74 genes](#) that are associated with educational attainment.

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Anticipating the deluge, the team have released [a long FAQ](#) explaining what they did *not* find. First and foremost, “there are no ‘genes for education’,” says Benjamin.

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But “these genes are not deterministic,” adds Benjamin. There’s a common myth that our traits can be divided into a fixed portion that’s “in our genes” and...a flexible portion that depends on the environment and is under our control. That’s wrong.

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So, educational success is not “in the genes”, nor can you “blame your genes” if you flunk out.

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Here’s the problem: we know that genes affect educational outcomes, but no one is currently taking them into account. That’s like trying to see if being overweight leads to heart disease without adjusting for diet, or checking if urban life affects lung cancer risk without controlling for smoking rates. If you don’t account for these other variables, you end up with a fuzzy picture.

**The GLP aggregated and excerpted this blog/article to reflect the diversity of news, opinion, and analysis. Read full, original post: [The Genetics of Staying in School](#)**