

## **Every Book You Take: Evaluating Compliance Behavior in an Information Commons**

**MATHEUS ALBERGARIA DE MAGALHÃES**  
CENTRO UNIVERSITÁRIO ÁLVARES PENTEADO (FECAP)

## Every Book You Take: Evaluating Compliance Behavior in an Information Commons

### Introdução

During the last decades, some authors emphasized the individualistic approach followed by economists and business students. In particular, there is the possibility that undergraduates who major in business would be more likely to free ride or defect from coalitions in collective action situations.

### Problema de Pesquisa e Objetivo

The present paper revisits this debate, by evaluating the impacts of business education on compliance behavior in a specific type of common-pool resource, an information commons (Hess & Ostrom, 2007a, 2007b; Rosen & Carr, 1997).

### Fundamentação Teórica

There has been a heated debate related to the effects of business background on ethical behavior. According to some authors, students majoring in business courses – such as accounting, economics, and management – would be more likely to free ride or defect from coalitions in collective action situations, given the emphasis of such courses on individualistic values. Other authors have challenged that view, presenting empirical evidence that questions the link between business education and opportunistic behaviors.

### Metodologia

To assess the importance of business background on compliance behavior in the present setting, I estimate (1) via Ordinary Least Squares (OLS): 
$$Y_{ist} = \alpha + \beta(\text{Business}) + X_{ist}\lambda + \delta t + \theta st + \epsilon_{ist}$$
In the case of the above specification,  $Y_{ist}$  represents the delay for an individual user  $i$ , in library  $s$ , at instant  $t$ . The term “Business” corresponds to an indicator variable, which assumes unity value for users with a business background, and 0, otherwise. I include users’, books’, and libraries’ dummies as controls in the regressions.

### Análise dos Resultados

The main result of the paper is the following: when estimating the effects of business background on compliance behavior in libraries, I cannot find a significant effect in this specific setting. That is, library users with a business background – such as accounting, economics, or management – do not present statistically significant differences when compared to users with other backgrounds.

### Conclusão

The results obtained suggest that there is no evidence of a significant effect of business education on compliance behavior in this specific setting. These results are in line with recent contributions in business ethics that question the influence of business education on important behavioral traits, such as individual orientation, cooperation and political views (Delis et al., 2019; Frey & Meier, 2003, 2005; Godos-Díez et al., 2015; Meier & Frey, 2004).

### Referências Bibliográficas

Carter, J. R., & Irons, M. D. (1991). Are economists different, and if so, why? *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 5(2), 171-177. Delis, M. D., Hasan, I., & Iosifidi, M. (2019). On the effect of business and economic university education on political ideology: an empirical note. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 155(3), 809-822. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-017-3483-9> Frey, B. S., & Meier, S. (2004). Pro-social behavior in a natural setting. *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, 54(1), 65-88. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2003.10.001>