Abstract

This thesis conducts a quantitative synthesis of 418 estimates of the effect of beauty on productivity as reported in 37 studies. We test the estimates of beauty effect for publication selection, using informal testing of the funnel plot as well as formal testing methods. We find solid evidence of selective reporting: positive estimates of the beauty effect are preferred in literature. To determine the sources of heterogeneity in the reported estimates, we collect the set of 21 explanatory variables. We take the model uncertainty into account and employ the Bayesian model averaging; the Frequentist model averaging is used as a robustness check. The results indicate that differences in the reported estimates appear to be driven by choice of study design and sources of real heterogeneity, such as geographical regions and individual characteristics of respondents (age, education and cognitive skills). The type of occupation and gender of respondents have no impact on the estimates of beauty effect in relation to productivity. The average beauty effect is probably much lower than commonly believed based on the available empirical literature.

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