

Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

Institute of Economic Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague

Student:	Ing. Kseniya Bortnikova
Advisor:	Doc. PhDr. Tomáš Havránek, Ph.D.
Title of the thesis:	Beauty and Productivity: A Meta-Analysis

OVERALL ASSESSMENT (provided in English, Czech, or Slovak):

Please provide your assessment of each of the following four categories, summary and suggested questions for the discussion. The minimum length of the report is 300 words.

Contribution

This is the first meta-analysis on the relation between beauty and productivity (both broadly defined), so the contribution is clear and after some revisions publishable in an international journal. The author collects 418 estimates of the beauty effect reported in 37 studies. Because individual studies use different measures of beauty and productivity (and, of course, not always estimate the relationship using a log-log specification), the estimates are not directly comparable and have to be translated to partial correlation coefficients. This is common practice, and the conversion is conducted competently. The author documents substantial publication bias in the literature: positive and statistically significant estimates of the beauty effect are preferentially selected for publication, which exaggerates the mean reported coefficient and also the prima facie conclusions one would draw from the literature. When corrected for publication bias, little evidence for any substantial beauty-productivity nexus remains in the literature. The author also discusses in detail how context in which the coefficients are estimated in the primary studies affects the size of these coefficients.

Methods

The author uses both classical meta-regression methods and also new techniques: for example, the stem-based technique due to Furukawa (2019, MIT WP). I also appreciate the use of modern methods to tackle model uncertainty inherent in meta-analysis: Bayesian model averaging and frequentist model averaging. In meta-regression techniques, it is important to take into account that the standard error can be endogenous to the reported estimate. A natural instrument is the number of observations used in the primary study, which is what the author uses. Excellent work.

Literature

No problems here, all relevant papers are properly cited.

Manuscript form

The thesis is written in solid English and typeset competently in LaTeX. Some information seems to be missing from Figure B.1. Figure C.1 is probably redundant. Figures D.1 and 4.2 are hard to read. But these are minor issues.

Summary and suggested questions for the discussion during the defense

Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

Institute of Economic Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague

Student:	Ing. Kseniya Bortnikova
Advisor:	Doc. PhDr. Tomáš Havránek, Ph.D.
Title of the thesis:	Beauty and Productivity: A Meta-Analysis

This is an excellent master's thesis that clearly deserves an A. Question: what are the potential benefits of new techniques for publication bias correction (such as Furukawa, 2019) in comparison with traditional meta-regression methods?

SUMMARY OF POINTS AWARDED (for details, see below):

CATEGORY	POINTS
<i>Contribution</i> (max. 30 points)	28
<i>Methods</i> (max. 30 points)	28
<i>Literature</i> (max. 20 points)	20
<i>Manuscript Form</i> (max. 20 points)	17
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100 points)	93
GRADE (A – B – C – D – E – F)	A

NAME OF THE REFEREE: Doc. PhDr. Tomáš Havránek, Ph.D.

DATE OF EVALUATION: 10.5.2019



Referee Signature

EXPLANATION OF CATEGORIES AND SCALE:

CONTRIBUTION: *The author presents original ideas on the topic demonstrating critical thinking and ability to draw conclusions based on the knowledge of relevant theory and empirics. There is a distinct value added of the thesis.*

<i>Strong</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Weak</i>
30	15	0

METHODS: *The tools used are relevant to the research question being investigated, and adequate to the author's level of studies. The thesis topic is comprehensively analyzed.*

<i>Strong</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Weak</i>
30	15	0

LITERATURE REVIEW: *The thesis demonstrates author's full understanding and command of recent literature. The author quotes relevant literature in a proper way.*

<i>Strong</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Weak</i>
20	10	0

MANUSCRIPT FORM: *The thesis is well structured. The student uses appropriate language and style, including academic format for graphs and tables. The text effectively refers to graphs and tables and disposes with a complete bibliography.*

<i>Strong</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Weak</i>
20	10	0

Overall grading:

TOTAL	GRADE
91 – 100	A
81 - 90	B
71 - 80	C
61 – 70	D
51 – 60	E
0 – 50	F