

Abstract

Despite a number of studies demonstrating that women are more risk averse than men, this strong consensus has recently been questioned. In this thesis we discuss what may be the reason for such contradicting outcomes. Firstly, we describe the most common elicitation methods and compare them from the perspective of reporting gender differences in risk attitudes. We also summarize current literature in the topic. Then we describe a design and analyze original dataset from a survey experiment conducted with university students, mainly investigating responses to a general risk question. We examine the role of variables that are different between genders and can explain risk preferences to see whether the gender difference is robust. We further focus on different dimensions of risk: we ask about risk taking in driving, financial, sports, career, and health domains. Our findings show that the gender differences in risk preferences are significant, ubiquitous, and can be detected by a simple survey measure, even after controlling for additional characteristics that are known to play role in attitudes to risk and differ between men and women. This applies for all studied domains except for the health one.