

The gravity of quality: Research quality and universities' attractivity in Italy[☆]

Massimiliano Bratti^{a,b}, Stefano Verzillo^a

^a*DEMM, Università degli Studi di Milano, via Conservatorio 7, 20122 Milan, Italy*

^b*Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA), Bonn, Germany*

Abstract

In this paper we investigate whether research quality is significantly associated with university student mobility across Italian provinces. We analyze first university enrollments of students in 2010 and 2011, and relate them to several research quality indicators computed from large databases (such as ISI-Thompson and Google Scholar) and official administrative sources (Five-year Research Evaluation) using a gravity model. Our estimates show that improving research quality may be an important means to attenuate brain drain or alternatively to promote brain gain. Increasing the number of Google-Scholar publications per researcher by 1% in a province, for instance, would produce a 0.33% decrease in the number of local students enrolling in university in other provinces.

JEL Classification I23

Keywords: brain drain, research quality, student mobility, Italy

[☆]Work in progress, comments are welcome. This version benefited from comments received during the presentations given at the University of Cagliari and the Sixth International Workshop on Applied Economics of Education (IWAE, Catanzaro).

Email addresses: massimiliano.bratti@unimi.it (Massimiliano Bratti),
stefano.verzillo@unimi.it (Stefano Verzillo)