Does University-industry Collaboration Improve Chinese Firms’ Innovation Efficiency?

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Abstract
This paper aims to investigate the impact of university-industry collaboration on firms’ innovation performance. The empirical analysis is based on a network DEA method which is applied to a unique dataset about 400 Chinese innovative firms covering the period of 2008-2011. The results show that the frequency of collaboration affects firms’ innovation efficiency positively, while the intensity of collaboration has a U-shaped relationship with innovation efficiency, particularly in the commercialization stage. The findings also show that Chinese innovative firms didn’t show consistent performance in the two stages of innovation, namely, the R&D stage and commercialization stage. Thus overall innovation performance may be affected and policy responses in the innovation process should be stage-specific. In addition, this study provides no evidence to support that collaboration affects efficiency in the two stages differently. However the indirect effects of collaboration on efficiency moderated by regional institutional factors are different.