

Summary of Paper: [Mitigating the Effects of Auditors' First Impressions of Client Personnel: The Importance of Audit Supervisors' Preference for Effectiveness](#)

What is this Study About?

This research investigates how auditors' initial impressions of client personnel are influenced by their supervisors' emphasis on audit effectiveness over efficiency, and how these impressions affect auditors' judgments on risk.

What are the major findings of the study?

Through an experimental setup involving 124 practicing auditors, the study manipulates both the nature of the first impression (positive vs. negative) and the supervisor's preference (effectiveness vs. efficiency) to explore their impacts on auditors' risk assessments. Auditors exposed to a supervisor's preference for effectiveness are less likely to let first impressions influence their risk judgments, compared with when efficiency is prioritized. Specifically, positive first impressions led auditors under the efficiency paradigm to perceive lower risk, a bias not observed when effectiveness was emphasized by supervisors. Moreover, the interaction between the nature of first impressions and the supervisor's focus highlights the importance of audit culture and leadership in shaping auditors' approach to risk assessment.

Why is the study important?

The study authors underscore the need for audit firms to prioritize effectiveness in their auditing practices. This is because effectiveness can serve as a counterbalance to the inherent biases introduced by first impressions, thereby enhancing audit quality. By understanding the dynamics between auditors' perceptions and supervisory emphasis, firms can better navigate the complexities of risk assessment, fostering an environment that upholds the integrity and objectivity crucial to the auditing process.