

Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

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

Student:	Lubomír Janšta
Advisor:	Mgr. Jindřich Matoušek
Title of the thesis:	What makes children feel good about their work: experimental investigation.

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

Lubomir deals with experimental economics, which is always interesting topic to discuss. Specifically he investigates how perceived meaning influences child performance, mood and enjoyment when performing work-related tasks. His work is inspired by Ariely, Kamenica and Prelec (2008) "Man's search for meaning: The case of Legos", who did a research on how perceived meaning influences labor supply. Author goes deeper to question by conducting an experiment with grammar-school students to see whether this demand for meaningful work is inborn or learnt during adulthood. In addition, research is expanded to the mental state such as mood and enjoyment, which are very important determinants of productivity. Definitely Lubomir is on a new path of behavioral economics, however for me there is no strong explanation why this research is crucial and mainly for whom it might be useful (implication of findings) on both micro and macro levels. For example, I can see connection of these findings to lean production, so it might be interesting for firms and factories, implementing it. It might be useful for policymakers to consider how to increase productivity of the society by adjusting school programs and so on. Good to think during further research.

I appreciate on a work done in Literature review section. It is very well organized and immerses reader into the subject. Numerous studies were reviewed and thesis demonstrates author's deep knowledge and interest in this topic. Lubomir did a good job on conducting experiment and further descriptive statistics, which is appropriate to the author's level of studies, however proper econometric analysis is missing.

The thesis is overall of a high quality. Last but not least, the thesis is nicely structured, written with adequate language. It is easy to go through it, following the logic. However, conclusion gives the impression of incompleteness and might be stronger. Author is finishing with a doubt regarding sample size, which is better to discuss in earlier sections.

I have a few comments and questions which were not perfectly answered in the thesis:

1. Author could follow proper methodology to assess perceived meaning. For example, Fig.2 does not support clearly author's finding. Summary statistics is mixed there. Therefore, it would be better to use econometric modelling rather than descriptive analysis. In my opinion normality test is not enough due to small sample.
2. Measurement of the mood might be date specific (we can have good or bad mood on a particular date, which can affect productivity).
3. What is the difference between Fig.3 and Fig.5? Does Male and Female perform exactly same?
4. The experiment is done for children age 15-16 years old. Can we make in this case conclusion regarding inborn demand for meaningful work? This age is a pick of adolescence, when young people have more need for recognition and meaningful of their job might be perceived even more than during adulthood. In this case what might be appropriate age for investigation?

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5. Author presumes that gender do not impact participant's performance and mood. This is my opinion is controversial statement as girls tends to be more sensitive to ignorance and demotivation. Anyway, results show possible gender-specific effects.
6. In the "Ignored" and "Shredded" conditions students were not asked to write their names. If they would be obliged to write their names, could it stimulate to do job better (be more productive)?

The thesis is of a high quality, therefore **I recommend the thesis for defense and suggest the grade B.**

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

CATEGORY	POINTS
Contribution (max. 30 points)	27
Methods (max. 30 points)	25
Literature (max. 20 points)	18
Manuscript Form (max. 20 points)	18
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100 points)	88
GRADE (A – B – C – D – E – F)	B

NAME OF THE REFEREE: Mgr. Olesia Zeynalova

DATE OF EVALUATION: 26.08.2019


Referee Signature