

Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

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

Student:	Ilya Filonau
Advisor:	Doc. Julie Chytilová, PhD
Title of the thesis:	The relationship of cultural and non-cultural characteristics of countries with the sharing economy size

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

Please provide your assessment of each of the following four categories, summary and suggested questions for the discussion. The minimum length of the report is 300 words.

Contribution

In his thesis, Ilya Filonau focuses on the link between the extent of sharing services (such as Airbnb, Uber, etc.) at a country level and (i) cultural characteristics and (ii) other important factors such as GDP or internet penetration. The research question is clearly stated and interesting. While the existing literature produced some knowledge about the role of the non-cultural factors such as GDP or internet penetration, the existing knowledge about the role of cultural characteristics is rather limited and this is the main contribution of the thesis.

Methods

To study the research questions, Ilya put together a dataset from various sources and uses standard methods to analyze the data. Unfortunately, the data available is quite limited and the sample size is not very large, a limitation which is hard to solve and has been acknowledged by the author in the thesis. At the same time, I like the fact that Ilya uses different dependent variables, each collected from a different source, in order to see the robustness of the findings.

When interpreting the results, the coefficients are often interpreted via potential correlations of the independent variables with other variables. However, in many cases these channels could be directly tested with the data since proxies of these third variables are observed. For example, the link between individualism and sharing economy is attributed to the fact that individualistic societies have more developed information and communication technologies, but this speculation is not tested with the data although it can be done (by controlling for internet penetration and evaluating the change in the coefficient).

Literature

The thesis provides a review of the literature which is relatively recent, given the nature of the topic. The references mostly include policy reports (European Commission, World Bank, etc) or the work of consultancy companies (PWC). For a bachelor thesis, I would recommend to include more references to academic work.

Manuscript form

In general, the thesis reads well and is written in good English, but there are a number of typos and the text is sometimes repetitive.

Summary and suggested questions for the discussion during the defense

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To sum up, I believe the thesis fulfills the requirements for a bachelor thesis at IES, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University, and suggest grade C or D, depending on the defense and discussion with the committee.

Suggested questions for the discussion during the defense:

- On p. 14, the following two statements do not seem to be consistent: „There are studies which have found some correlation between cultural characteristics and the adoption of sharing economy.“ „However, they do not have numerical evidence or analysis of these findings.“ Can you please explain?
- You speculate that the correlation with individualism may be due to better developed information technologies, or that the correlation with the index of economic freedom may be due to its correlation with GDP. Can you test these hypotheses directly with your data?
- The Eurobarometer measure was collected in two different years and thus for each country you have two observations. How do you deal with this in the regression analysis?

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

CATEGORY	POINTS
<i>Contribution</i> (max. 30 points)	25
<i>Methods</i> (max. 30 points)	15
<i>Literature</i> (max. 20 points)	15
<i>Manuscript Form</i> (max. 20 points)	15
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100 points)	70
GRADE (A – B – C – D – E – F)	C-D

NAME OF THE REFEREE: *Julie Chytilová*

DATE OF EVALUATION: *August 28, 2019*

Referee Signature

EXPLANATION OF CATEGORIES AND SCALE:

CONTRIBUTION: *The author presents original ideas on the topic demonstrating critical thinking and ability to draw conclusions based on the knowledge of relevant theory and empirics. There is a distinct value added of the thesis.*

<i>Strong</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Weak</i>
30	15	0

METHODS: *The tools used are relevant to the research question being investigated, and adequate to the author's level of studies. The thesis topic is comprehensively analyzed.*

<i>Strong</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Weak</i>
30	15	0

LITERATURE REVIEW: *The thesis demonstrates author's full understanding and command of recent literature. The author quotes relevant literature in a proper way.*

<i>Strong</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Weak</i>
20	10	0

MANUSCRIPT FORM: *The thesis is well structured. The student uses appropriate language and style, including academic format for graphs and tables. The text effectively refers to graphs and tables and disposes with a complete bibliography.*

<i>Strong</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Weak</i>
20	10	0

Overall grading:

TOTAL	GRADE
91 – 100	A
81 - 90	B
71 - 80	C
61 – 70	D
51 – 60	E
0 – 50	F