

Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

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

Student:	Natálie Toulová
Advisor:	doc. PhDr. Julie Chytilová Ph.D.
Title of the thesis:	Male Attitude and Family Planning Practices in Angola

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 her thesis Natálie Toulová studies to what extent male attitudes towards family planning affect its adoption. She relies on a cross-sectional data set from Angola and considers the effects of male attitudes on women's unmet need for family planning, usage of contraceptives and involvement of husbands/partners in the decision making process. The author finds that men's knowledge of contraception increases the probability of its use by the respective couple. As this issue was not yet studied for the case of Angola, I believe that the author makes a clear contribution to the respective topic and makes her contribution clear throughout the text.

Methods

In her thesis, the author relies on a cross-sectional survey of Angolan households. The author seems to be aware of the limitations imposed by the nature of the survey data, which leads her to interpret her results rather as correlations than causations. I also appreciate that the author does not take the data at face value but compares different sections of the survey in order to assess the reliability of the data. In the quantitative analysis of her thesis, the author relies on both probit and logit models, which I believe to be the correct approach.

Still, it is possible to identify shortcomings in the analysis:

First, in her model the author controls for "*background characteristics of men (including age, education, wealth religion), their knowledge of contraception, attitudes towards contraception, and their fertility preferences.*" (pg. 11). On the other hand, she does not control for the characteristics, nor the preferences of the woman. The empirical specification of the model should be discussed more.

Second, I believe that the author should have provided more details about the design of the survey and discuss to what extent it could have affected her results. For example, whether men and women were interviewed together or separately. Or provide a brief explanation for why over 14.3 thousand women were included in the survey, while only about 5.7 thousand men were covered. Though beyond the control of the author, these factors can influence the resulting estimates and should be discussed.

Third, the empirical analysis lacks clear focus. In section 4 the author specifies 14 hypotheses that she tests by her models. Consequently, the thesis lacks appropriate discussion of the findings as well as the basis for the concrete hypotheses. Furthermore, some of the hypotheses seem illogical, e.g. Hypothesis 12 states that "*Wanting no more children has a positive effect on not using contraception.*" (pg. 14 and 32) whereas one might argue that either wanting more children should have a positive effect on not using contraception or wanting no more children has a positive effect on using contraception.

Literature

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The author seems to have a strong grasp of the empirical literature. Sources are correctly referenced.

Manuscript form

The thesis would benefit from a thorough proofreading. For example on pg. 12 the author claims that "Control variables include men's in 5-year groups (only aged 15-54 were interviewed)". However, the tables presenting the results in Chapter 6 of the thesis (table 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, and 6.4) contain only one probably continuous variable controlling for age. Furthermore, throughout section 4, the author is referring to Table 3.1, 3.2 etc. while the respective tables are tables 4.1, 4.2 etc. Though separately not so grave, combined with a considerable volume of typos, these errors make it unnecessarily hard for the reader to follow the text.

Summary and suggested questions for the discussion during the defense

To sum up, I believe that the thesis fulfils the requirements for a bachelor thesis at IES, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University. In case the author addresses the issues raised in this review I suggest **grade B**.

Below I provide some questions that can be asked during the defense.

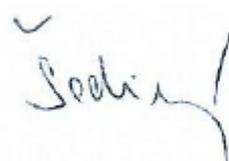
- In your models you do not control for the characteristics or the preferences of women. Aren't you afraid that this might lead to biased results?
- Could you provide a more detailed description of the survey data you have used and discuss whether their characteristics could have affected your results? For example, were men and women interviewed together or separately?
- Could you provide a more detailed interpretation of your findings? Do they have any policy implications?

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

CATEGORY	POINTS
Contribution (max. 30 points)	27
Methods (max. 30 points)	20
Literature (max. 20 points)	19
Manuscript Form (max. 20 points)	15
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100 points)	81
GRADE (A – B – C – D – E – F)	B

NAME OF THE REFEREE: Marek Šedivý

DATE OF EVALUATION: 29.5.2020



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.*

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.*

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

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.*

Overall grading:

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