

Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

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

Student:	Tereza Čechová
Advisor:	prof. PhDr. Lenka Šťastná, Ph.D.
Title of the thesis:	The Effect of Socio-Demographic Factors on Consumer Trends in the Czech Republic

Short summary

The author examines the socio-demographic determinants of four selected aspects of consumer behavior in the Czech Republic. Data used are pooled cross-sectional survey data from Median agency that include individuals' consumption preferences (the dependent variables in this thesis) as well as demographic variables such as age, region, income. The author uses an ordered logit model with time fixed effects.

Contribution

The autor identifies several socio-demographic variables that are associated with higher propensity to recycle, consume Czech products, consume bio products and travel. Compared to the existing literature, the main contribution of this paper is in using long-term, detailed and up-to-date data. Especially the regional aspect provides a new point of view to the issue.

I consider the contribution appropriate for a bachelor thesis and the findings interesting. The author could nevertheless be more specific about the relevance of her findings for policy-makers/companies/future research.

Methods

The author picks four dependent variables of interest, and uses the socio-demographic variables as independent variables. Three dependent variables are taken directly from the survey data (recycling, travelling and Czech products consumption), but one is constructed as an index from five different survey questions (the Bio index).

As the data are pooled cross sectional and the dependent variables are categorical, the author uses an ordered logit model with time fixed effects.

While the author claims she analyses *trends*, the model specification is, in my opinion, rather static. In other words, she is merely searching for the determinants of recycling rather than the determinants of the *increase* in recycling. The trends themselves are presented in the thesis only by describing the data with graphs, which, while interesting and well reported, cannot be considered a contribution of this thesis.

Nevertheless, I consider the methods appropriate for a bachelor thesis. It is also positive that the author used a Brant test to check the parallel regression assumption, as well as experimented with different functional form specifications (namely with the age variable in the Recycling model).

Literature

The literature review is well executed and covers existing studies on the topic in the Czech Republic, as well as selected foreign papers.

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Manuscript form

The overall flow of the thesis, as well as the structure of paragraphs, is very good. I only encountered minor typos.

However, the Results section includes four subsections with the same title „*Detailed interpretation of model*“, which appear copy-pasted from each other (i.e. the text of each subsection is very similar, only the results are adjusted each time to the respective model). Ideally, the discussion of the results should be more concise and „model-specific“. It is nevertheless appreciated that the autor provides an executive summary-like introduction to the results of each of the four models.

Overall evaluation and suggested questions for the discussion during the defense

In my view, the thesis fulfills the requirements for a bachelor thesis at IES, Faculty of Social Sciences. I recommend the thesis for defense and I suggest a grade B.

The Urkund analysis does not suggest that the thesis was plagiarised.

I suggest the following questions for the defense:

- How can your research be relevant for policy makers or for companies?
- Have you considered including interaction terms in your models? For example, to see if the effect of some variable varies over time?

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

CATEGORY	POINTS
Contribution (max. 30 points)	30
Methods (max. 30 points)	25
Literature (max. 20 points)	20
Manuscript Form (max. 20 points)	15
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100 points)	90
GRADE (A – B – C – D – E – F)	B

NAME OF THE REFEREE:

Daniel Kolář

DATE OF EVALUATION:

digitally signed, 24.5.2021, Daniel Kolář

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