REPORT ON MASTER THESIS
CENTER FOR ECONOMIC RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

STUDENT:	Angjelina Kotarja
ADVISOR:	Andreas Menzel
TITLE OF THE THESIS:	The Impactof Floods on Maternal and Newborn Healthcare in Pakistan

OVERALL ASSESSMENT:

CONTRIBUTION: This thesis extends an existing literature about the consequences of natural disasters, such as the Pakistani flood events that the thesis itself examines, on health outcomes of affected individuals. Specifically, this thesis focuses on: *i.* a natural disaster (a flood) occurred in a developing country (Pakistan); *ii.* the impact upon newborn children and their mothers; and *iii.* it attempts to do so using adequate, conventional econometric methods for estimating the causal impact of interest, i.e. differences-in-differences estimators possibly adapted to binary outcomes. The author states at various degrees of explicitness that all these elements also appear elsewhere in the literature, but I agree that their combination, coupled with the specific setting and the data elaboration that was instrumental to producing the results, confer a certain degree of novelty to the data construction and analysis, despite the circumscribed nature of them.

METHODS: In the thesis, the author does a good job at presenting issues related to differences-in-differences estimation for binary outcome variables using non-linear models such as the logit, and elaborating the results accordingly. This is certainly praiseworthy. However, the very nature of the data being used calls for approach to address the issue of spatially correlated errors, as the statistical tests reported in the results shall be considered inconclusive – or based on a confidence level presumably different from the one(s) reported – as long as this issue remains unaccounted.

LITERATURE: The literature review appears very comprehensive from an outsider's point of view. I recognize the author's effort into developing the review as a thread that would connect all previous contributions of interests to the subject of the thesis. Still, this reads erratically at times.

MANUSCRIPT FORM: Overall the manuscript is well-redacted and structered. There are some very minor, occasional typos or issues about syntax that do not detract from its value. Equations and mathematical formalism are also well-developed. I lament the lack of well-developed notes below figures and tables, which present some unclear, clarification-worthy elements. There is at least a missing reference, shown by the manuscipt as the key **namasivayam2017effect**.

SUMMARY AND SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR THE DISCUSSION DURING THE DEFENSE:
This is a useful empirical exercise redacted into a nice thesis. There are some limitations, which is natural in a Master's thesis, but the author discusses them in a dedicated paragraph. The author may be asked what steps ideally shall be taken to address such limitations. In addition, the author may be asked about spatially correlated errors, their implications, and ways to address them.

Please indicate whether you recommend the Thesis for defense or not.

I recommend the thesis for defense.

TEXT ORIGINALITY CONTROL

I confirm that I acquainted myself with the report on the originality of the text of the thesis from

[ ] Theses   [X] Turnitin   [ ] Ouriginal (Urkund)

Comments on the reported results: the Turnitin report highlights some sources with shared text between 1% and 5%; all of these are websites that aggregate scientific journals. There are many other sources with shared content lower than 1%, typically indicating phrases that are standard in the literature of interest. These results appear mechanical and not a threat to the thesis originality.

SUMMARY OF POINTS AWARDED

CATEGORY		POINTS
Contribution	*(max. 30 points)*	23
Methods	*(max. 30 points)*	25
Literature	*(max. 20 points)*	18
Manuscript Form	*(max. 20 points)*	18
TOTAL POINTS *(max. 100 points)*		**84**
GRADE *(A – B – C – D – E – F)*		**B**

NAME OF THE REFEREE:

Paolo Zacchia

DATE OF EVALUATION:

August 29ᵗʰ, 2022

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.

Strong	Average	Weak
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.

Strong	Average	Weak
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.

Strong	Average	Weak
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.

Strong	Average	Weak
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**