

Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

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

Student:	Julie Kováčsová
Advisor:	PhDr. Mgr. Jana Votápková, Ph.D.
Title of the thesis:	Does growing up surrounded by books improve our cognitive skills as seniors?

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

Julie chose a very interesting topic for research and examines whether growing up in a book-rich environment impacts cognitive functions during older ages, particularly numeracy. She uses data from SHARE (Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe) and the logit model to obtain the results, which show that being surrounded by books in childhood leads to an 11.69 % increase in chances to pass numeracy test being over 50 years old.

This work is inspired by Sikora et al. (2019), "Scholarly culture: How books in adolescence enhance adult literacy, numeracy and technology skills in 31 societies", however, uses different data source and methodology. I suggest focusing more on the contribution of this thesis and the novelty that it brings, because it is not clearly explained how this work is benefiting or how it can extend existing literature. The motivation for choosing this topic, its importance and further implication can be better developed at the beginning of the thesis to catch the reader's attention.

The Literature review section provides an overview of the existing state of knowledge. However, gives a feeling of just listing papers rather than delivering a story supported by research. Therefore, this section might be improved.

The methodology (logit model) is appropriate to the author's level of study. It provides general information about the model and is individualized to the current research.

Writing is not developed enough in some parts, but not to the extent of distracting a reader. Therefore, the thesis is overall of good quality and well-written with adequate language and style, including the academic format for graphs and tables.

Below are few comments:

- It might be interesting to discuss whether libraries are still relevant as the world is becoming more digitalized. Whether the new generation will really need to use a library if they have quick and easy access to information from the internet. Situation 50 years before was different as real books were main source of the information.
- What are the role of other factors than individual characteristics? Country and regional characteristics, literacy rate in that country, living in the city vs region etc. are important factors that play pivotal role on numeracy.
- As a minor comment, figures and tables should be referred

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In my view, this thesis fulfils the requirements for a bachelor thesis at IES, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University. Therefore, I **recommend it for the defence and suggest a grade B.**

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

CATEGORY	POINTS
<i>Contribution</i> (max. 30 points)	23
<i>Methods</i> (max. 30 points)	27
<i>Literature</i> (max. 20 points)	18
<i>Manuscript Form</i> (max. 20 points)	15
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100 points)	83
GRADE (A – B – C – D – E – F)	B

NAME OF THE REFEREE: Mgr. Olesia Zeynalova

DATE OF EVALUATION: 15.01.2023

Digitally signed (15.01.2023):
Olesia Zeynalova

Referee Signature

