

# Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

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

<b>Student:</b>	<b>Martin Kolda</b>
<b>Advisor:</b>	<b>PhDr. Julie Chytilová, Ph.D.</b>
<b>Title of the thesis:</b>	<b>Differences in Competitiveness at a Young Age: An Experiment.</b>

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

The author Martin Kolda provides in his thesis a report on his experiment which he carried out with young scouts. The experiment is rather a replication of an experiment of Gneezy and Rustichini (2004) on the gender differences in performance under competition. The topic the author chose is very important and quite new as the seminal paper on gender differences in competitiveness comes only from 2007.

**Manuscript form:** The thesis is well structured and organized, written in English with negligible mistakes. From the introduction it is clear why this topic is important – the gender gap in labor market is a big issue and the difference in competitiveness by gender seem to bring another piece of the puzzle. Therefore I am glad that it was the topic of a bachelor thesis of a bachelor student at IES. What I am missing is the author contribution to the replicated experiment, apart from a different task and the environment without peers evaluating the subjects' performance. Also, what is the motivation for pursuing this replication in this specific environment and subject pool?

**Literature review:** What I find a little disturbing is how the author uses crucial terms: competitiveness and competition. His experiment is aimed at performance under competition, but competitiveness generally refers to willingness to enter the competition. Author often uses the terms interchangeably and therefore it is confusing to go over the text. The literature review is focused mostly on competitiveness and thus it is a little irrelevant, or at least it should not have been that much longer than the part on the performance under competition. If the author goes into discussion competitiveness, then he should have included important studies to illustrate the full picture of the field today. He does not mention some recent important studies such as paper of Buser (2012) on the impact of menstrual cycle on competitiveness, comparison of Cardenás (2012) of willingness to compete of boys and girls in Colombia and Sweden, or summary of Niederle and Vesterlund (2011) on gender and competition. The described studies are sometimes too brief or miss some important facts. As the author uses in the analysis single-sex groups, he should have added some more literature on differences in competitiveness with respect to the gender of the opponent. These shortcomings are however not important for explaining the general situation in the field and the point for the experiment.

**Methodology:** The experimental design follows the steps of Gneezy and Rustichini with one modification, which is the task – subjects build a tower from LEGO pieces instead of running. Subjects did not know they were part of the experiment and they received no reward at all. They performed the task first alone and second in a direct competition with another member of the scout group. The main variable of interest was the time change between the first and the second round. I miss here the motivation for the literature for the applied design.

**Analysis:** The final sample of 67 people is not big and unbalanced the 38 questionnaires collected from the parents do not allow a very deep analysis of the underlying forces of the difference in the performance. Comparison of four boys to nine girls in the control condition then almost does not have sense. Generally, some ways of analysis lack sense from the point of view of a small sample and were even not necessary to perform. The histograms of the distribution of times are a little confusing and I miss the point why were they included.

### **Summary:**

The thesis contains a good replication of a well-known experiment with some minor modifications. Literature review and the analysis could have been carried out in a different way, but in my opinion it overall suffices to be defended as a bachelor thesis.

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**Suggested questions for the defense:** What is your novel contribution to the literature that you did in this experiment?

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

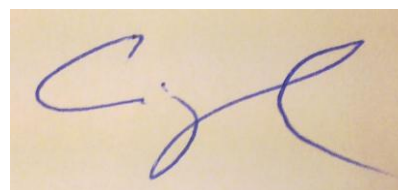
<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
<i>Literature</i> (max. 20 points)	12
<i>Methods</i> (max. 30 points)	21
<i>Contribution</i> (max. 30 points)	20
<i>Manuscript Form</i> (max. 20 points)	16
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b> (max. 100 points)	<b>69</b>
<b>GRADE</b> (1 – 2 – 3 – 4)	<b>2</b>

**NAME OF THE REFEREE:**

**PhDr. Lubomír Cingl**

**DATE OF EVALUATION:**

**9.6.2013**



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**Referee Signature**

**EXPLANATION OF CATEGORIES AND SCALE:**

**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

**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

**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

**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 POINTS	GRADE		
81 – 100	<b>1</b>	= excellent	= výborně
61 – 80	<b>2</b>	= good	= velmi dobře
41 – 60	<b>3</b>	= satisfactory	= dobře
0 – 40	<b>4</b>	= fail	= nedoporučuji k obhajobě