

REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS

IEPS – International Economic and Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

Title of the thesis:	Preventing the optimal Outcome – Free-Riding at Charles University
Author of the thesis:	Jonas Kibitzki
Referee (incl. titles):	Mgr. Michal Paulus

Remark: It is a standard at the FSV UK that the Referee's Report is at least 500 words long. In case you will assess the thesis as "non-defendable", please explain the concrete reasons for that in detail.

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

CATEGORY	POINTS
<i>Theoretical background (max. 20)</i>	18
<i>Contribution (max. 20)</i>	16
<i>Methods (max. 20)</i>	18
<i>Literature (max. 20)</i>	19
<i>Manuscript form (max. 20)</i>	10
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100)	81
The proposed grade (1-2-3-4)	1

You can even use a decimal point (e.g. giving the grade of 2.5 for 60 points).

Comments of the referee on the thesis highlights and shortcomings (following the 5 numbered aspects of your assessment indicated below).

1) Theoretical background:

The thesis is well related to existing literature. The topic is based on extensive literature review. The hypotheses are derived from particular paper for the purpose of international comparison of the results. The questionnaire is also inspired by existing papers. Therefore, the thesis is well backed by contemporary empirical and theoretical papers.

2) Contribution:

The contribution of the thesis is empirical in two aspects. At first it examines the free-riding problem and related teamwork aspects on the students from the Czech university (first study of this type). Secondly it presents comparison of the thesis's outcomes (Czech students) and findings of Jassawalla et al. (2008) on American students.

However, the author should be much more explicit about the contribution of the thesis. For a reader it would be much easier to realize the thesis's value added if a clear description of the contribution is included in the introduction chapter (and summarized also in the conclusion part). At this moment a reader must deduce it from reading the whole text.

3) Methods:

The methodology of the thesis is based on the relevant papers. The questionnaire was inspired by Jassawalla et al. (2008). The hypotheses are based on the mentioned study and other relevant literature. All results are critically discussed and related to literature. Therefore, I have no serious comment related to the methodology except two comments.

I would welcome at least small paragraph explaining in general how (with reasons) the t-test is used in the paper. Then many interpretations would be much clearer.

I miss at least small discussion about one potential cause behind the differences in free-rider experiences of various student groups. We see much lower experience with free-rider behavior between bachelor than master students (except 1st year bachelor students who answer the question

according to their high-school experience). Those differences can be caused simply by class structure – structure of compulsory classes which may include much less teamwork at the beginning of the studies than in later years. That discussion does not influence results of the thesis. Anyway I would still expect at least to discuss that while the rejection of this hypothesis may open new interesting problems. However, I do not regard that point as serious. I would regard it as a “discussion commentary”.

4) Literature:

The thesis is based on extensive literature review. Author summarizes main types of motivation losses and discusses studies related to the research on the motivation losses at schools – especially students’ perception of free-riding.

5) Manuscript form:

The weakest part of the thesis is the manuscript form. Text should be checked for grammar and typos. Very often “:“ is used to end the sentence instead of full stop, some words (verbs) are missing, etc.

Instead of proofreading the text needs also more careful editing. Some sentences are unclear or hard to understand. E.g. on page 18:

*“This omnipresence combined with the other findings such as the reactions towards social loafing or the comprehensive perception of social loafing is the **unique contribution of this master thesis**: The authors themselves state that they did not try to reach widely generalizable findings.”*

In the first sentence author claims that the omnipresence and other findings are the unique contributions of the master thesis. However, the preceding paragraph and also sentences following this one are all about the work of Jassawalla et al. (2008). Therefore, a reader is confused whether the mentioned contribution really belongs to the thesis because logic of the text indicates the paper of Jassawalla et al. (2008).

I would also recommend to refer to questionnaires in the Appendix much earlier, no later than on page 25 where author starts describing concrete set of questions from the questionnaire (*“The next set of questions, items 5.1 up to item 5.4...”*) otherwise a reader is confused to what part of the thesis is author referring.

Also author should shortly explain the types of the questionnaires in the appendix. There are more of them and reader is confused to which purposes they serve.

General concluding commentary

The thesis is at the boundary between “excellent” and “good” grades. I have chosen the better one because I have not found huge methodological or theoretical weaknesses. However author should demonstrate the quality of his work at the defense to convince commission about the better grade. He should especially explain more in details the purpose and the application of the t-test, potential influence of class structure and he should also clearly and explicitly present contribution of his thesis.

DATE OF EVALUATION: 18.8. 2016


Referee Signature