

Report on Bachelor Thesis

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

Student:	Tereza Klečková
Advisor:	PhDr. Wadim Strielkowski, Ph.D.
Title of the thesis:	Ekonomická analýza vlivu fází Měsíce na lidské chování

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

The Bachelor thesis by Tereza Klečková's is focused on the economic analysis of moon phases on human behavior. This is the second version of the thesis that represents an updated version of the same thesis submitted in May 2014. Although some economists might perceive it as non-traditional, or perhaps even bizarre, I think it represents a remarkable insight into the potentials of today's economic science. I cannot but admire Tereza's persistence in pursuing such a controversial topic. I also have to admit that she had been very keen on writing her thesis on the effects of moon behavior since the very beginning and had managed to execute an excellent job even though she had to re-write her thesis after her failure to defend it in June 2014.

Tereza's interest in moon phases and their potential links to various aspects of human life reflects a well-known phenomenon that has been occupying many scientists' minds for decades. For quite some time now, scientists have been wondering whether there has been any connection between moon phases and various aspects of human life (e.g. crime rates, economic behavior, natural phenomena, strange occurrences, etc.). Moon, by some accounts, is massive object in the sky that affects, for example, the cycle of tidal waves or the growth of plants. Some mentally unstable individuals claim to be attracted by the full moon, others experience sleep disorders and anxiety. Artists are fascinated by the full moon and its depiction might be found on many famous works of art (for instance, Van Gough's). There have been many recorded cases of sleepwalking caused by what doctors believe to be the change in moon cycles. For many people the causality is straightforward: the moon attracts the Earth's waters and governs its seas' and oceans' tides and because human body consists of 80% of liquids, moon might attract these liquids too.

There is a plethora of studies dealing with what is called "the lunar effect" in research literature. For instance, Templer, Veleber, and Brooner (1982) claimed in their study that an unusual number of traffic accidents occurred during the evenings right around the full and new moons. A study of homicides in Dade County, Florida (Lieber and Sherin, 1972) found an upsurge in killings in the 24 hours before and after the full moon. Other researchers, however, argued that the Dade County researchers employed dubious statistical methods (when the numbers were reevaluated, the pattern disappeared altogether).

Moreover, Rotton and Kelly (1985) conducted a meta-analysis of 37 studies of the moon's effect on things like psychiatric admissions, suicides and crime (they called it BILE (Belief in Lunar Effects)). The researchers found that the moon accounted for no more than 0.03 of 1 percent of the monthly variation. The results of the BILE study indicated that there was a greater belief in lunar effects in the older participants than in the younger ones. The researchers also determined that belief in lunar effects appears to be based on age and not on social class or education. Another study (Jorgenson, 1981) concluded that persons with an external locus of control were more likely to believe in lunar effects on human behavior than would persons who possess an internal locus of control. Rotton, Kelly, and Elortegui did a follow-up study in 1986 to determine if belief in lunar effect on human behavior was more predominant in police officers and people working in psychiatric areas than among other people. It turned out that police officers exhibited a high belief in lunar effect as opposed to a lower belief by regular people. However, psychiatric care workers did not seem to give any credit to lunar effect. The explanation might be that they were influenced by articles in recent scientific journals regarding research being done in this area.

Most recently, Leflet (2009) examined a correlation between lunar phases, criminal activity and crisis calls. He conducted a study of individuals arrested by law officials and emergency calls made within the St. Joseph, Missouri area for a two-month period beginning July 17, 1999, and ending September 12, 1999. On the basis of the study, he concluded that common folklore concerning the effect of the changes in lunar phase and human behavior is unsubstantiated.

To sum it all up, Tereza's updated version of her Bachelor thesis has 90 pages and includes several tables and graphs. It consists of 5 well-structured chapters and is complimented by Appendices. The

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work is outlined in a logical and concise way, the literature review is exhaustive and the empirical models are well-defined and linked to the similar research in the economic and statistical literature.

All in all, it can be seen that the interest in the influence of moon phases on human behavior is persistent among scientists. Tereza Klečková's thesis represents a unique attempt to think "out of the box" and come up with many interesting findings and conclusions.

Overall, it seems to me that this thesis exceeds the standards set out for Bachelor theses at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague (both in scope and in its topic).

Therefore, I recommend Tereza Klečková to be given a concluding mark of "**výborně**" (**excellent, 1**).

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

CATEGORY	POINTS
<i>Literature</i> (max. 20 points)	18
<i>Methods</i> (max. 30 points)	26
<i>Contribution</i> (max. 30 points)	30
<i>Manuscript Form</i> (max. 20 points)	19
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100 points)	93
GRADE (1 – 2 – 3 – 4)	1

NAME OF THE REFEREE: PhDr. Wadim Strielkowski, Ph.D.

DATE OF EVALUATION: 03.09.2014

Wadim Strielkowski

Referee's signature