Report on **Bachelor Thesis**

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

Student:	**Barbora Chochláčová**
Advisor:	**Barbara Pertold-Gebická, Ph.D.**
Title of the thesis:	**Estimation of the Optimal length of maternity leave**

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

The thesis deals with gender-wage gap and aims to find its relationship with with parental leave legislation, specifically the length of paid leave and the length of job protection in weeks when on maternity leave. The theoretical underpinnings are explained in chapters 1 and 2. Chapter 1 describes the concept of gender wage gap and its causes in general. It assumes parental leave legislation to be one of the causes for it. Chapter 2 goes on describing parental leave legislation in OECD countries and the Czech Republic. In chapter, 3 an econometric analysis is carried out. The length of paid leave and the length of job protection in weeks are tested empirically as potential causes for gender-wage gap. For the former, the author finds insignificant results, whereas for the latter, the results are partly significant.

The theses deals with a very interesting topic, the empirical approach taken is adequate for an undergraduate thesis. It can be considered as the first-step analysis which should be followed by furher research. Naturally, the first exploration of the topic suffers from a number of imperfections, some of which the paper acknowledges, but a number of them are omited. **The major drawback of the thesis are not the imperfections themselves, but the fact that the thesis does not sufficiently elabore on them and does not theoretically fully explore the potential for their improvements, should the data allow for it.**

For instance, the author suggests that an additional analysis, should the data allow for it, should be carried out for different age groups (see further questions for the defense), but an analysis for educational groups/professions/income quintiles, would reveal even more interesting results. Actually, I think that the reason why the effect of parental-leave legistaltion is rather insignificant in the analysis is caused by the fact that the dataset is aggregated for the whole nation disregarding these individual groups.

Another drawback of the thesis is **that it largely misses the academic style,** instead the author often expresses her opinions, often repeats what has already been said, in some parts it is difficult to follow author´s flow of thoughts, the author uses a lot of „fillers" such as „generally speaking", etc. and references are often in a wrong format.

Minor issues:
1. Figure 8 and 9 should rather be a line chart than a bar chart.
2. Missing list of abbreviation
3. Variables should be consistently abbreviated throughout the thesis. For instance, tprotected and tpaid is provided on page 25, but not explained. And these variables are not found anywhere else in the thesis anymore, rather time-trend is used in the results tables.
4. The author claims that there are no outliers, but from figure 10, observation [10,7] is obviously an outlier.

Questions for the defence:
1. Why should the future analysis, should the data allow for it, be carried out for different age groups? I do not see the reason for it since we are actually interested for the wage gap over lifetime not for specific age groups. What would disagregated analysis for different age groups tell us?
2. The author argues that longer job protection in weeks reduces gender wage gap because the employers want to keep high-quality female human capital. It seem to however contradict the fact that highly skilled women shorten materninty leave as much as possible and return to

Report on **Bachelor Thesis**

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

Student:	**Barbora Chochláčová**
Advisor:	**Barbara Pertold-Gebická, Ph.D.**
Title of the thesis:	**Estimation of the Optimal length of maternity leave**

work early so that their human capital does not deteriorate and they keep pace with the progress in the field. They thus obviously do not exploit the loger job protection in full. How does this in your view correspons with your claim that loger job protection reduces gender wage gap?

3. The author finds that GDP change decreases wage inequality. But doesn't decrease wage inequality in general, disregarding maternity leave? I recognise the GDP change in the regression rather as a conrol for some kind of intrisic charasteristics of the country being a proxy for the level of development and attitude towards equality between sexes in general. To be more specific, in developing countries, women tend to rather work as house-wives. If women enter the labor market at all, they are predetermined to work in specific sectors of the economy such as teachers, nurses, etc whereas some sectors of the economy are fully closed to them. Nevertheless, this is not the case in the developed world. Here comes the justification for thte proxy, then.

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

CATEGORY		POINTS
Literature	*(max. 20 points)*	15
Methods	*(max. 30 points)*	25
Contribution	*(max. 30 points)*	25
Manuscript Form	*(max. 20 points)*	10
TOTAL POINTS	*(max. 100 points)*	**75**
GRADE	**(1 – 2 – 3 – 4)**	**2**

NAME OF THE REFEREE:

Jana Votápková

DATE OF EVALUATION: June 1, 2016

_____
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	**1**	= excellent	= výborně
61 – 80	**2**	= good	= velmi dobře
41 – 60	**3**	= satisfactory	= dobře
0 – 40	**4**	= fail	= nedoporučuji k obhajobě