Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

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

Student:	**Jana Holková**
Advisor:	**PhDr. Václav Korbel**
Title of the thesis:	**Discrimination of Slovak people in the Prague rental housing market – A field experiment**

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

Please provide your assessment of each of the following four categories, summary and suggested questions for the discussion. The minimum length of the report is 300 words.

Contribution

This thesis provides the first evidence of propensity to discriminate Slovak people in the Prague rental housing market using a field experiment. It extends the literature mapping discriminatory behavior in the rental housing market.

Methods

The applied methods are appropriate. Jana applies a logit model to estimate the probability that the applicant will receive a response from the landlord based on the applicant‘s nationality. She also uses average partial effect for better interpretation of the model.

Nevertheless, I have few notes.
First, to the specification of the control model. I would expect that the first sent email might have a higher chance for a response than others. Therefore, I would rather use *ord_d1* instead of *ord_d4.* I would also try to run a separate regression on two subsamples, only students, and only employees as a robustness check.
Second, maybe a little question for the defense. Have you tried to control whether some landlords do not rent more flats? How would you deal with that?

Literature

The literature review is broad, and it is evident that Jana got familiar with the relevant studies.

Manuscript form

Generally, the thesis is very well written. It follows a logical structure and the data are clearly described. There are only minor imperfections (i.e., Jana could have provided information about what she reports in the parenthesis in tables). At the same time, the text could have been more cohesive. For example, the chapter about discrimination theories is not very well interconnected to the researched topic. Sometimes each paragraph starts a new topic not connected to the previous paragraph.

Summary

I appreciate the time Jana spent with preparing the experimental design and collecting the data. From the quality of the work is seen that Jana is highly interested in this topic and I recommend her to craft a polished working paper based on the thesis and try to submit it to an international journal. If the defense is very convincing, I recommend grade A.

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Suggested questions for the discussion during the defense

You mention the importance of time when the housing advert was released. Have you tried to control for the time gap between addressing the landlord and releasing the advert measured at least in days? Or have you every time chosen only the advertisements released the day you sent the emails?

Why have you formulated the emails from fictitious adult applicants less specifically than the emails of Young applicants? (If the landlord has more advertisements he cannot recognize which flat is demanded as the email does not contain advert number, part of the city, type of the flat, or street.) Do you think that this formulation might have influenced the difference between response rates for students and employees?

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

CATEGORY		**POINTS**
Contribution	*(max. 30 points)*	28
Methods	*(max. 30 points)*	25
Literature	*(max. 20 points)*	20
Manuscript Form	*(max. 20 points)*	16
TOTAL POINTS	*(max. 100 points)*	**89**
GRADE	**(A – B – C – D – E – F)**	**B**

NAME OF THE REFEREE: Dominika Špolcová

DATE OF EVALUATION: May, 23rd, 2018

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Referee Signature

EXPLANATION OF CATEGORIES AND SCALE:

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*

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*

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*

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	**GRADE**
91 – 100	**A**
81 - 90	**B**
71 - 80	**C**
61 – 70	**D**
51 – 60	**E**
0 – 50	**F**