



Institut ekonomických studií
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Velká obhajoba disertační práce
Dissertation Defense

Vít Macháček
Chapters in cross-country analysis of science

25. 10. 2023 v 17:10, místnost 206
October 25, 2023 5:10 pm, room 206

Školitel / Supervisor:

Ing. Martin Srholec Ph.D.
(CERGE-EI)

Komise / Committee:

Doc. PhDr. Jozef Baruník Ph.D. (IES) - předseda komise

Vincent Larivière PhD (University of Montreal) -
opponent

Theo van Leeuwen PhD (Leiden University) - opponent

doc. Ing. Daniel Münich PhD (CERGE-EI) - opponent

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Práce dostupná na: / Available:

<https://iesdev.fsv.cuni.cz/default/file/download/id/34824>

Opponent's Report on Dissertation Thesis

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Author:	Vít Macháček
Advisor:	Ing. Martin Srholec Ph.D. (CERGE-EI)
Title of the Thesis:	Chapters in cross-country analysis of science
Type of Defense:	DEFENSE
Date of Pre-Defense	February 22, 2023
Opponent:	doc. Ing. Daniel Münich PhD (CERGE-EI)

Address the following questions in your report, please:

- a) Can you recognize an original contribution of the author?
- b) Is the thesis based on relevant references?
- c) Is the thesis defensible at your home institution or another respected institution where you gave lectures?
- d) Do the results of the thesis allow their publication in a respected economic journal?
- e) Are there any additional major comments on what should be improved?
- f) What is your overall assessment of the thesis? (a) I recommend the thesis for defense without substantial changes, (b) the thesis can be defended after revision indicated in my comments, (c) not-defensible in this form.

While each of the three chapters represents a self-standing essay (paper), they are interlinked by the notion of R&D and jointly represent nice triple. The first chapter on predatory publishing provides rather unique analysis of still growing phenomena of predatory publishing across countries worldwide. The analysis builds on rich data put together by the author. Research findings presented provide rather unique and valuable insight for policy makers in the area of R&D management across the world. The findings, no wonder, are more important for countries with weaker culture of R&D assessment. The second chapter on researchers' institutional mobility is materializing innovative idea to estimate the degree of academic inbreeding based on affiliations trackable via publications. Extended with smart presentation of findings the research provides world-wide unique insight and information on inbreeding, very fundamental phenomena for all university systems world-wide. The third chapter on the globalization of scientific communication is also nicely exploiting new research options offered by global databases. Well designed indicators provide another set of unique insights on global developments in the fields of basic science. Each of the three chapters provides rich, relevant

and useful list of references which were reasonably amended in the final round of revisions based on our previous comments.

Great deal of the thesis work had been accomplished during times Vít had been affiliated with the IDEA at CERGE-EI under supervision of dr. Srholec and I have followed his work from the very initial stages of his mere research idea, through very demanding data retrieval and processing towards actual analysis. Thanks to this, I can fully acknowledge Vít's original contributions in all three dimensions. There are no doubts about it.

I can only guess that such a thesis would not be defensible at CERGE-EI. But there are rather specific reasons behind. First, the thesis topics would be considered too broad at CERGE-EI and too interdisciplinary without sufficient content of classical 'economics'. Second, my colleagues at CERGE-EI would be probably be pointing to missing evidence on causal relationships and related identification strategy. Third, the thesis does not employ too advanced econometric methodologies. I personally do not find these as strong enough reasons because world we study is not so narrow. Just the opposite, I find the research topics very relevant and rarely explored, at least in the Central European region, and the evidence provided as rather unique, valuable and opening new questions.

I note that each of the three chapter had been published already. Each of them in a respectful international journal. This fact alone is very reliable indication of research quality and contribution to the global knowledge. Given that these journals employ demanding review processes, the chapters are very well crafted both in terms of contents, but also in term of their structure and language. This is also why I do not have much to add. The 1st paper even raised high academic attention worldwide due to an intervention from lobby type of publishers using not very standard practices the paper is highlighting.

I had raised numerous partial comments and questions in my report on the preliminary version of the thesis. I recognize that these comments were treated seriously by the author and have been either reflected in the final version of the thesis to be defended or acceptable clarifications have been provided by the author in his written feedback to both referees.

There is obvious values added in each of the three thesis chapters (papers). Each of the chapters materializes rather unique and interesting research idea. Each is built on and relies on a unique and extraordinary demanding data processing work which required very insightful and novel approaches. The empirical statistical analysis done at the very end of the work does not require too sophisticated methodologies, but it does not mean that it is less valuable. Each

of the three chapters provides easy to understand and plausible new evidence, very interesting and important, in some sense also unique. Contrary to many other empirical studies in this area, this one is not a small extension of existing research and not just another replication. The chapters represent original new contributions utilizing options newly offered by large and growing global databases. In this respect I do not mind at all that the three studies do not consider identify some causal effects / relationships. The descriptive evidence provided itself is very valuable as it is. Naturally, research findings of the chapters open many new questions concerning the motivations and behaviors of individual and institutional agents underlying observed patterns in academic publishing and mobility. I appreciate it too.

Overall, I am pleased to recommend the thesis for a defense.

Date:	October 11. 2023
Opponent's Signature:	
Opponent's Affiliation:	doc. Ing. Daniel Münich PhD (CERGE-EI)