

Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

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

Student:	Bc. Eva Skácelíková
Advisor:	Doc. Julie Chytilová, Ph.D.
Title of the thesis:	Studying Changes in Mental Health Among University Students Throughout an Academic Year in the Context of the COVID=19 Pandemic

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

Short summary

The diploma thesis of Eva Skácelíková focuses on the determinants of mental health problems among university students in the Czech Republic. Given the ongoing debates about increasing prevalence of serious mental health problems among general population and young adults in particular, this is a very important research area. Eva uses a longitudinal dataset which allows her to observe mental health of a sample of students in more than 40 points of time. The frequency of data collection was high and thus she can study how mental health evolves during different periods of academic year. In addition, she analyzes a sample of non-students of similar age to address the question whether the observed effects are specific to students or arise more generally for young adults. The thesis reads well, it is clearly structured and well organized. The results are important.

Contribution

The main contribution is a detailed focus on impact of different periods of academic year on mental health of university students. To the best of my knowledge, this has not been done in the existing literature. Another part of the contribution is the focus on the sample of students and young adults in the Czech Republic. The literature studying mental health in the context of ČR is limited and the findings of the thesis are potentially important for policy makers.

Methods

The author uses appropriate econometric methods. The data and analysis are clearly described and carefully executed. I appreciate including a relatively large number of robustness tests as well as a discussion about limitations of the study.

Literature

It is obvious that the author has a sound knowledge of the relevant literature, including the most recent studies. The thesis provides a nice, useful and well-structured overview of the literature on mental health, looking at it from various relevant angles. Eva also clearly spells out the contribution of her thesis to the existing literature. She also states several specific hypotheses which she tests with the data and which are clearly linked to the findings of the previous studies.

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Manuscript form

The thesis reads well and is written in good English. The text is well-structured and the tables clearly organized.

Overall evaluation and suggested questions for the discussion during the defense

To sum up, I believe the thesis fulfills the requirements for a diploma thesis at IES, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University. I recommend the thesis for the defense and suggest grade A.

The results of the Turnitin analysis do not indicate significant text similarity with other available sources.

Suggested question for the discussion during the defense:

- Is there anything you would like to know and did not learn the answer to when working on the thesis, perhaps due to limitations of the available data?
- Based on the results of your analysis, what steps do you think should be taken (by the government, by the universities) to improve mental health of university students?

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

CATEGORY	POINTS
<i>Contribution</i> (max. 30 points)	30
<i>Methods</i> (max. 30 points)	30
<i>Literature</i> (max. 20 points)	20
<i>Manuscript Form</i> (max. 20 points)	19
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100 points)	99
GRADE (A – B – C – D – E – F)	A

NAME OF THE REFEREE: Julie Chytilová

DATE OF EVALUATION: May 16, 2024

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.*

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.*

LITERATURE REVIEW: *The thesis demonstrates author's full understanding and command of recent literature. The author quotes relevant literature in a proper way.*

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.*

Overall grading:

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