

POSUDEK OPONENTA DIPLOMOVÉ PRÁCE

Název práce: Transnational links, integration, and influence of Ethiopian diaspora on Ethiopian development

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1. Obsah práce

Cíle, výzkumné otázky, hypotézy (*přiměřenost cílů, geografický charakter a relevance cílů, teoretické podložení hypotéz aj.*)

The evaluated thesis sets two objectives, which it tackles quite successfully in the analysis based on the data collected, though not all the concepts included are examined thoroughly enough in the theoretical framework. The thesis endorses some geographical concepts and perspectives like transnationalism, the tensions between “center” and “periphery,” or country development determinants. However, the geographical embedding of the theoretical discussion is not explicitly discussed or mentioned in the text.

Práce s literaturou (*teoretické ukotvení práce, diskuse a kritické zhodnocení literatury aj.*)

The concepts of **transnationalism, diaspora, impact of diasporas on their home countries, the Ethiopian context** and the **influence of Ethiopian diaspora on home country development** are quite well covered by references to key names and works on the topics, though sometimes the discussion is a bit confusing or repetitive. Some key concepts would benefit from a more thorough explanation (human capital, social remittances). The concept of „**integration**“, let alone its interplay with the studied concepts of „transnationalism“ and influence of diasporas on home country affairs, is not tackled in the theoretical section at all, even though it is included in the title of the thesis, the author works with it quite intensively in the analysis, and the overall objectives of the thesis call for examining it. A large body of academic literature crucial for the topic of the thesis is thus being neglected. Similarly, the concept of “**identity**” (esp. “ethnic” vs. “national” identity) is not examined in much detail in the theoretical section, even though it is tackled in the analysis and given quite a lot of space in the conclusion. This is a topic of intense academic discussions and would require much more thorough examination in all parts of the thesis if it was to be studied properly. Instead of introducing it only superficially, I would leave it out completely.

I positively evaluate the various international examples of diaspora impact on their home countries and the overview of the diaspora authorities, organisations and mechanisms functioning in Ethiopia. On the other hand, I am missing a **discussion of the potential or documented impact of the Ethiopian diaspora on homeland development in relation to its size** (in relation to a population of 110 million, a diaspora of 3 million is in fact quite small compared to other states). Also, I consider the use of the Ethiopian diaspora in North America “as a sample for this thesis” (p. 31) and the related information given (on employment, economic status and educational attainment) as redundant, as it is not clear why this is done (except that most survey respondents resided in the USA) and the author does not refer to the information again later in the text. Instead, I would prefer

a brief contextualisation of the statistical data provided (comparison of the sizes of Ethiopian diaspora in different parts of the world, a comparison with the sizes of other diasporas).

Metodika práce (*vhodnost aplikovaných metod, kvalita a vhodnost použitých dat aj.*)

The methodological background of the chosen approach is not explained at all and the method is explained only very briefly with no use of literature to support the chosen research design. The author mentions she used „convenience“ and „purposive“ sampling, with no explanation of what they are and what their shortcomings are. Here, a critical reflection of the limits of the chosen method (sampling bias) is absolutely necessary, as the resulting structure of the sample has a key impact on the findings – lack of representativity, respondents from only a very limited part of the population were included (majority of diaspora respondents were students and majority of homeland respondents were teachers). The sizes of the two subsamples are only specified in an appendix, the text itself only provides the total N. The total N (137) of the sample is not large, but acceptable for a student thesis. However, since application of statistical measures (percentages and Chi-square test) to below-100 values (the two subsamples) is problematic, it should be critically reflected upon and used carefully. A critical reflection of the use of English as the survey language would also be beneficial.

The questionnaires include some formulation errors: e.g. EITHER-OR questions asked, but YES/NO answers given as options (q. 31, 32, 44), unclear or complicated formulations compromising the likelihood that respondents understood them correctly (q. 15, q. 16, q. 30 “ethnicity” vs. “nationality”), use of academic terms that respondents might not understand (“diaspora”, “remittances” – q. 14, 34, 35, 48, 49), q. 43 asks about “relatives” living abroad, while the analysis interprets this as “close” family living abroad, which might be a major difference when speaking about receiving remittances.

Analytická část práce (*správnost a interpretace výsledků, detailnost, struktura a provázanost analýzy*)

The analytical part is based exclusively on an interpretation of the data collected using an online survey constructed for the use of the thesis. I appreciate the author’s effort at undertaking a statistical analysis, though obviously with a sample of 137 respondents the options are limited. Putting aside the interpretative limitations relating to the sampling approach and structure of the sample (see above), the author has done a good job at relating the responses of the homeland-based and diaspora respondents to one another, as well as relating the respondents’ answers to their length of stay, self-reported economic status and integration. There are only a few minor mistakes or unclarities in interpretation of the results. However, what is missing in the analysis, and largely also in the subsequent discussion and conclusion, is a reflection of the empirical findings in relation to the theoretical concepts and claims laid out in the beginning. This is a key problem that makes the analysis rather superficial and descriptive, instead of truly “analytical.”

Závěry práce (odpovědi na výzkumné otázky, zasazení závěrů do širšího kontextu výzkumu aj.)

The final chapter „Discussion and Conclusion“ summarizes the analytical findings, relating them to the objectives set in the beginning. I appreciate that diaspora’s perceived and potential contribution to the political and economic development of Ethiopia is given the most attention in line with the central topic of the thesis. However, unfortunately, the discussion very rarely relates to the findings of other authors and claims made in the theoretical section. In the end, it is not well explained why the identified practical involvement of the diaspora respondents in Ethiopian affairs is rather weak, while other authors, the current Ethiopian government, as well as the respondents themselves seem to believe that generally diaspora contributes a lot (here, it would be very desirable to recall the limitations of the sample). A setting of the findings in the relevant research context and a final evaluation of the relevance of the findings is missing altogether.

2. Formální náležitosti práce (zatrhněte Vaši volbu)Formální úprava: výborná / **velmi dobrá** / dobrá / nevyhovujícíStylistická úroveň: výborná / velmi dobrá / **dobrá** / nevyhovujícíCitační úroveň: výborná / **velmi dobrá** / dobrá / nevyhovující**Komentář** (vč. kvality grafiky, (ne)přiměřenosti délky práce aj.)

The linguistic quality of the text is not perfect, including misspellings, grammar mistakes and some unclear formulations. However, overall the language is sufficient and most of the time the author’s statements are comprehensible. As regards formatting, I see no major shortcomings.

Referencing and the use of quotations mostly conforms to basic academic standards. However, in some cases the author has mistaken the first names of referenced authors for their last names (e.g. Anneke and Robert 2014; Frédéric 2006; Terrence 2011). At some points the use of in-text references is slightly non-standard and there are a few other minor errors. However, I appreciate that the reference list includes all the works cited, but no additional ones.

3. Souhrn**Celkové zhodnocení práce** (vč. přínosů práce, provázanosti teoretické a analytické části aj.)

The thesis brings up an important and currently a very attractive topic academically and sets it in the context of recent turbulent political changes in Ethiopia. The author has demonstrated her enthusiasm for the research by constructing a relatively comprehensive theoretical chapter which creatively builds on a long list of relevant sources, though omitting a few important concepts, showing great analytical potential. She has also managed to transform the theoretical concepts into a survey questionnaire and proved her ability of simple statistical analysis and interpretation of findings. However, the methods chapter is insufficiently developed, including a missing discussion of research limitations, which are quite crucial for the interpretation of the findings. The main shortcoming of the paper then is the superficiality of the analysis and conclusions and the lacking connection between the theoretical foundations of the thesis and the findings, which means the final discussion ends up being descriptive and non-innovative, missing its original potential.

Předloženou práci **doporučuji / nedoporučuji** k obhajobě. (zatrhněte Vaši volbu)

Otázky k obhajobě

1. How would you explain the „convenience“ and „purposive“ sampling techniques that you mention in your text, and justify their suitability for use in your research?
2. Why do you think there is such a gap between the practical involvement of your diaspora respondents in „homeland affairs“ (activities aiding Ethiopian development) and the general perception that Ethiopian diaspora strongly contributes to Ethiopian development? In other words, if it is not their involvement in official organisations and funds, what is it they do that does help the country to develop/change?

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Podpis: