



REVIEW OF DIPLOMA THESIS

Review type: Opponent's Review

Author of the diploma thesis: Arailym Otemurat

Title: The outbound mobility of higher education students from Kazakhstan

Author of the review: **Mgr. Michaela Šmídová, Ph.D.**

The topic of diploma thesis is original and in conditions of the Czech Republic seems to be interesting and bringing new findings. The most valuable feature of the thesis is connecting of available official data from Kazakhstan, research studies about HE in the country and - last but not least - conducted interviews with HE students about motivation and obstacles for mobility respectively (non)studying abroad. A specific issue of cultural values and social pressure stands out significantly from the broad topic of outbound mobility. Thus diploma thesis provides new information/findings in relevant and understandable context.

Path dependency as a main theoretical explanatory starting point for interpretation of research results is functional. However, author did not use the potential of chosen theory in explanation of results from interviews (as primary data sources) and secondary data. I.e. path dependency is in the discussion section (part V) implicitly but explicitly is not mentioned almost at all. An attentive reader could see it in many ways but author does not help very much. It's a pity because such topic (and presented results) directly encourage(s) author to use the theory in a more visible and analytical way...

Structure of work corresponds to usual academic standards. Research questions are clearly stated although they are broad. Methodology was developed relatively ambitious. Especially conducting of sociological online survey with Kazakh students was probably redundant if I see presented results which are used separately, without other interpretation and explanation (see p. 43)¹. As author herself declares in the text, diploma thesis and mainly its part which is based on qualitative research, e.g. interviews, was quite strongly and negatively influenced by pandemic situation. As a result, author led interviews only with students and no HE or state representatives were available for

¹E.g. it is not clear and explained, if a survey took place before or after interviews and what was the reason for its realization.



(even online) questioning. Taking into consideration these limitations author dealt with the situation sufficiently.

Diploma thesis would require much more careful editing. As a specific problem could be mentioned (sometimes) inconsistency in using of terms – it is not simple to judge if this is the question of language or field (i.e. higher education research) expertise. Some parts of the text seem to be repetitive.

According to my opinion diploma thesis has two significant limitations or problems: 1) unused opportunity for deeper analysis and 2) more critical/careful editing (not just language but also content). On the other hand, it presents original knowledge regarding development of HE in Kazakhstan after collapse of USSR in relation with much longer cultural traditions and their persistency. What more, author had to demonstrate ability to cope with unexpected situation (and to modify methodology) as well as reactions of some informants.

For the above reasons, I recommend the diploma thesis for the defense. **My grading is C.**

Questions for defense:

Do female graduates use their education at labor market actively? I.e. after they got married and have child/children, are they work at positions which fit to their study field(s)? (This question goes probably beyond the topic.)

How big problem is a brain drain from Kazakhstan? Is it more female or men issue?

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Signature: