



MASTER THESIS REVIEW

Type of review:	opponent's review
Author:	Wang Ren
Title:	Primary healthcare development during the healthcare reform in China and future direction - with experience inspiration from UK
Author of review:	Ing. Mgr. Olga Angelovská

The master thesis presented by Wang Ren deals with a live **topic** of health care reforms. He targets on primary health care in China. I appreciate the choice of the topic as current and interesting, but its elaboration remained rather superficial.

The author chose a broad **goal** for his thesis "*to get implication and come up with suggestions of futures directions of PHC development in China*" (p. 30). The research questions are not formulated properly, because the author formulated them as dichotomous (p. 31) and that makes them closer to the operationalization of some indicators than research questions itself. It is not clear what period the research should cover. The author mentions National PHC System Planning Outline (2015-2020) and "*by evaluating the current work outcome, we will find the advantages and disadvantages of related polices*" (p.30). But on page 13, he wrote, "*the author would analyze PHC system in China from 2009 to 2020 in this paper.*"

The missing theories are the fundamental weakness of the thesis. There is no **theoretical** approach. The author included the chapter called *Theoretical background* (p. 11-29), but the chapter is just a description of the health care system in China and partly in the UK with no theoretical aspect.

I have more reservation about the chapter. I miss more authors reflections on the described topic. Despite the subtitle, the description starts with the new millennium and not in 80' (p.11). The author divided the period of new health care reform into three time periods (p.12-13) but nowadays, in 2021, he could immediately inform if planned priorities were fulfilled at least for the first period. He often mentions interesting information, but he makes it too generally. For example, in case the development of primary healthcare, he wrote "*many of new policies in 21st century was actually been planned or executed decades ago*". (p.14) But interesting information would be to what period the author dates the roots of the policies - to 60'with emergence of barefoot doctors (p.9), to 80'with the development of the social economy (p.16) or in the new millennium (p.11). In case of part on collapse of the PHC system (p. 17) the author could support his description by statistics or reports. It is not clear if the scheme (p. 16) is the author's own scheme or he took it over from the other source.

The author could check his statements within more sources. When he claimed the British National Medical Service System "*once rated as the world's best medical system by the global authoritative rating agency Commonwealth Fund*", (p. 25) I am not sure the author



was aware that the agency rated just 11 countries. Within the WHO reports the first place belongs to France while the UK has got the 18th place.

In the chapter **Methodology**, we may find methodology as well as results. I would recommend to include results in the separate chapter. I agree with the choice of UK as a case for comparison; nevertheless, I miss the better rationale of it. I suppose that his statement that "*the UK PHC policy as a whole is better than that of China and therefore can be used as an object for benchmarking*" is based on Vartiainen's article anyway it would be good to offer more concrete information, for example, indicators which make the UK system better (number of beds, lower mortality etc.) I also recommend the author to use primary sources in cases when sources are easily available. I don't see the reason why to quote the WHO report according to Lei's article from 2016 and not to go to the original WHO report from 2003. (p.33) Also, the connection of aid-based development related to the topic of the reform is not clear. (p.34) In the methodological chapter I miss the information on the source of data and their analysis. In the beginning of the chapter one important sentence stayed unfinished. (p. 30)

In part *Policy Evaluation* (p.34-42), the author tries to compare two systems. He chose the areas for comparison well; however, the comparison itself is weak. He doesn't compare the systems from the same perspective (for example, the aspect of satisfaction in the UK is not mirrored to the case of China p.39-40).

The chapter 3.3 *Result* (p.42-47) I evaluate as the added value of the thesis. Unfortunately, without previous operationalization, it is really hard to judge the validity of the results. I didn't find in the text the explanation why different goals are compared (for example "*More citizens have their registered GP*" in case of China and "*All citizens strictly follow the PHC system*" in case of the UK, p.43)

The structure of the whole thesis is not clear. Concerning the literature, the author uses relevant literature, but he could check his statements in more sources.

To summarize, in my opinion, the lack of theories, the inconsistency of comparison, lack of operationalization and the poor methodology make the thesis unacceptable for defence.

For the reasons mentioned above, I do not recommend the thesis for defence.

Date: 2nd January 2021

Signature: