



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Bc. Kristýna Pelikánová

Title: Family Planning in the Development Policy of the United States: Empowering Women or Instrumentalization of Women's Bodies?

Programme/year: MV/2024

Author of Evaluation (supervisor): doc. PhDr. Běla Plechanová, CSc.

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	7
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	20
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	30
<i>Total</i>		80	57
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	9
	Style	5	2
	Formal requirements	5	2
<i>Total</i>		20	
TOTAL		100	70



Evaluation

Major criteria:

The thesis aims to answer question whether the foreign aid directed to the area of family planning does not have an agenda to control the growth of population in the recipient countries depending on the interests of the donor. The Author's objective is to find determinants of the family planning aid allocation and to what extent is the policy in case of the United States determined by the concerns associated with population growth. The title of the thesis indicates that the Author is going to consider two alternative explanations of the amount of the financial aid of the US to the family planning area to developing countries and arouses expectation that the analytical part of the thesis would seriously weight each of the alternatives. Unfortunately, the thesis does deliver on this. Nevertheless, it presents the topic in a context of a well-informed discussion of the evolvement of the population-related foreign aid policies, pointing to the problematic history of efforts to control the population growth in low-income countries and looking for the remnants of these approaches of the past in recent US policy in this area.

The text of the thesis is in general well structured, presents the problem in a comprehensible manner. But the sections lack coherent theoretical framework that would allow a consistent track for the analysis and interpretation of the findings. The Author claims (p. 31) that based on the literature review, economic goals, environmental goals, and security goals of the doners were identified in the foreign aid policy (without reference to key pieces of literature) that would be operationalized in the following analytical sections. Unfortunately, the research design does not provide a summary of the theoretical argument for each of the variables that are introduced in the subsequent section (4) that would connect the discussion in the introductory sections with the analytical parts (Methodology, Results, and Discussion). In terms of the ratio of the scope of the sections, the text suffers from a disbalance between rather extensive, broad, and less focused presentation of the topic in sections 1 and 2 and relatively brief presentation of the research design in the sections 3 and 4. As a result the findings offered by the thesis lack in conclusiveness.

- The variables are described in the data section in a brief manner without explaining their place in the model/alternative models. The reader may ask where does e.g. maternal mortality as one of the independent variables fit in? Why other variables that may serve as indicators of one of the three aforementioned groups of goals are not included – e.g. migration flows for security concerns?



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- Choice of the method - the section in general lacks references to methodological literature. It relies on arguments of authors of empirical studies on similar topic, which may show right direction, but not necessarily. The only - presumable - reference to methodological piece is no. 150 (Kennedy, 2003)(p. 42), but without title and other biblio info and without listing the book in the bibliography of the thesis.
- Data – The reader may miss the tabulation of the primary data, as an appendix, to allow clearer picture. Descriptive statistics in a form of means and standard deviations do not provide this picture, table 2 does not provide units of measurement.
- Description of data management and manipulation should follow only after the choice of the statistical method.
- Results and Discussion – the results unfortunately show rather weak conceptual preparation of the models used for analysis. Consequently, the Author is not able to provide coherent interpretation that would speak to the findings of the literature reviewed and/or to the assumptions mentioned in the introductory parts of the thesis.

Minor criteria:

The text would benefit from further proofreading. The number of typos is bit annoying for the reader. At number of places the sentences are inconsistent in their structure.

Assessment of plagiarism:

The Theses application does not indicate any issues (6 percent of the overall similarity), the Turnitin claims 38 percent of similarity (without finding any incidence of plagiarism).

Overall evaluation:

The overall evaluation of the submitted thesis is positive, the text meets the criteria for the MA thesis. The aforementioned critical comments explain in more detail the final grade.

Suggested grade:

C/D

Signature: