Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Marica Farini

Title: Understanding Gender Violence in Latin America: Challenges and State Responses

Programme/year: MAIN / 2024

Author of Evaluation (second reader): Mgr. Jakub Tesař, Ph.D.

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	**10**	7
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	**30**	18
	Methodology, analysis, argument	**40**	10
Total		*80*	35
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	**10**	4
	Style	**5**	4
	Formal requirements	**5**	4
Total		*20*	12
TOTAL		*100*	47

Evaluation

Major criteria:

The submitted thesis deals with gender violence in the context of Latin American countries. The author focuses on two selected countries (Paraguay and Argentina) and reviews their trends/policies on gender inequality and violence alongside social movements that aim to transform the established patterns.

The author shows an excellent grasp of the topic and a deep understanding of the local contexts. The thesis also works with rich feminist literature, which helps conceptualize the patterns discussed. However, the thesis is methodologically weak, and its contribution is therefore minimal.

First, the research questions on page 8 are all descriptive. The author reviews secondary literature, official policies/programs, and some statistics on her topic. The descriptive nature is not a problem per se, but there is a lack of synthesizing the insights from different sources; the thesis is therefore limited to summarizing what is already available in existing literature. The answer to question two is limited; question three (comparison of the movements) is not addressed.

The biggest issue of the thesis is a missing method. The author mentions using the mixed method, but it only means combining different kinds of data (available statistics and qualitative studies). No method guides the empirical analysis. The thesis is driven theoretically by insights from feminist studies. However, the observations stay general and often repeat findings already available in the existing literature. Even though the thesis discusses two countries, there is no effective comparison between countries/movements.

The thesis features a great review of scholarship on gender violence, but I miss conclusions that would provide the necessary foundation for the thesis. (How does the thesis define gender violence while reflecting on existing disagreements? How does this inform the presented study (what will you focus on when working with the empirical material?)? Other literature that could help frame the analysis is scholarship on social/political movements and their contribution to political processes, which is not employed in the thesis.

Statistical data presented in the thesis provide limited insights into the topic; they are very general (on the aggregate level of the whole country, mainly in a single year, i.e., no trend is discussed). Moreover, they are not always presented/explained well, so the reader has trouble interpreting what is presented.

Minor criteria:

The thesis has a clear structure, but (as explained above) it lacks any method that would guide the argument and connect individual parts. The presentation would be clearer if the author did not jump between countries in individual chapters.

The text is situated using a solid number of sources. But, the in-text references are imprecise; direct quotations are often distinguished in the text (e.g., using italics (p.10)) but do not provide a direct reference with page numbers. The author is sometimes clear from the context, but not always. Many sources included in the bibliography are never used in the text (Diaz and Lopez (2016), Gedeon and Gagliardi (2006), Oropeza, Perron, and Toledo (2014), etc.). All online sources are missing the information on the date of access. Some sources are referred to with a URL instead of a proper in-text reference (e.g., all figures in the text).

The text is written in good language, but the author sometimes uses Spanish terms without providing translation in the language of the thesis (e.g., caption for Figure 6). Some parts of the text are repetitive (e.g., p. 51-52).

Assessment of plagiarism:

The anti-plagiarism software did not find substantial overlap with existing sources, but in-text references are often imprecise (see above)

Overall evaluation:

The thesis discusses a highly relevant topic; the author clearly understands existing literature and local context. However, the work does not use any relevant analytical method and is imprecise regarding the standards of academic writing (use of sources). Given these substantive limitations, I do not recommend the thesis for defense.

Question for defense: If Argentina is so successful (having a "rich history of activism," being a "beacon of the global struggle for gender equality," or the "epicenter of seismic shift" (all p. 43)), how is it possible that its statistics related to inequality/violence are not substantially different from the Paraguay case or other LA countries?

Suggested grade: F

Signature:

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