

Opponent's report on master thesis

Zhaniya Karmenova: Differentiation of marital and reproductive behavior in East Kazakhstan

The main goal of the thesis is to study marital and reproductive behavior in East Kazakhstan region and find differences by sex, age, nationality and place of residence. The impact of external socio-economic factors on the level of nuptiality and fertility was also the subject of the study. The thesis consists of 3 chapters (109 pages), 47 tables and 52 figures are also included.

First part of thesis (introduction) informs about the goal of thesis and outlines partial issues under study. Critical remarks on official approaches to demographic issues in Kazakhstan are also included. On page 11, author considers nuptiality and fertility as demographic components of natural increase. Of course, in many countries, there is a close connection between level of nuptiality and fertility, mainly in population with low proportion of extra-marital births. But strictly speaking the natural increase is the excess of births and deaths, it means includes only fertility and mortality.

First chapter is devoted to theoretical issues and methodology, but in several cases the names of sub-chapters are not strictly in accord with their content. For example, overview of the literature (1.1) includes not only information about literature, but also substantial theoretical issues (second demographic transition) and brief description of present demographic situation in the region. Besides, overview of the literature has no standard arrangement. Authors, books and projects mentioned in the text are not included in references (in final list of literature), names of authors are mentioned separately without quotation of their principal works and a year of publication. Discussion of theoretical issue of marriage is the subject of chapter 1.2. Also in this part, there is no accordance in text and references. In addition, a lot of theories and opinions are included in text without quotation of authors. Last sub-chapter (1.4) is devoted to data sources and methods. Author informs about two principal sources of data: official statistics of Kazakhstan and social survey "Marital and reproductive behavior of youth of Ust-Kamenogorsk". Again, the survey is not cited in final list of literature. Speaking about methods: concerning nuptiality, author informs only about crude marriage rate, other measures and corresponding formulas are not mentioned (by author opinion: they were obtained from statistical publication).

By author, second chapter informs generally about demographic trends in the region. In fact, it gives short historical overview of the region, great part is devoted to the economic, social and cultural situation and information about demographic trends (better present demographic situation) is included in the last sub-chapter (2.3). The time period under consideration is different – probably the main reason was sources of data.

The most important part of the thesis represents the third chapter, which informs about results of survey "Marital and reproductive behavior of women in Ust-Kamenogorsk". This chapter consists of four parts: main characteristics of sample, information about marital and reproductive behavior and value orientation of respondent.

Questions for discussion:

1. Why author presents conclusions of the survey as preliminary (p. 102)?
2. Positive development of fertility and nuptiality (p. 103), modernized marital and reproductive behavior (p. 103) – what does it represent?
3. What was the reason for a choice of East Kazakhstan region?

The master thesis of Zhaniya Karmenova give interesting information about present demographic behavior in East Kazakhstan, about value orientation of young people and changing attitudes to family. Reminders and suggestions mentioned above concern mainly so called technical matters.

The author has fulfilled the thesis objectives and there are no serious deficiencies of the thesis. I recommend the thesis for the defence.

RNDr. Květa Kalibová, CSc. May 22, 2010

