

Evaluation of Master thesis

Development of Population Quality and Reproduction of Human Capital in Kazakhstan

presented by

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The presented Master thesis is dealing with an important topic which is up to now under rather large scientific discussion. Such terms as human capital, population quality, intellectual capital, social capital, organizational capital, labour capital, structural and institutional capital or even cultural and moral capital, political capital represent a complex meaning, which are usually described or defined differently by various specialists. Some of them subsume all these terms under human capital, others under intellectual capital and we can find also other approaches. It was not easy for Murat Narkulov to deal with all these concepts. He was right to develop his own concept and to subsume all these concepts under the population quality (page 37) and to add three levels of human capital: individual, company and national capital.

The thesis has two main parts with introduction (1) and conclusions (4), the first dealing with theoretical, conceptual and methodological concepts of population quality (3) and second, in which the author tried to specify different concepts to Kazakhstan. It is not surprising that the second part is mainly based on demographic data with some supplements (standard of living and share of population living under the subsistence level).

There are some problems which author did not touch. I would like to mention some of them, although I do not mean this as a critique. Population quality is not an economic concept and so it cannot be expressed by financial transactions. Economy is based on productive and unproductive man since Adam Smith (he did not consider services as productive). Unproductive people are very often extremely useful (without taking any salary or reward). As an example we can mention family or household services (cooking, cleaning, washing, education of children, taking care of sick and old family members etc.). How we evaluate these services? Such services could be developed also out of family. Time dollars exist without any financial expression in Japan (although they could be for exchange). This creates a problem how to quantify human capital, which is not comparable in its qualitative expression. People are doing things sometimes without expecting financial reward. How to quantify social capital under which it is possible to see the credibility, reciprocity, mutual help, social nets, common norms and values, mutual responsibility and effective informative nets?

These are more or less suggestions for further work in this subject. I do not have critical comments to the presented thesis. It is logically organized and also technically very good presented. I recommend presented thesis by Murat Narkulov for father defense and I am evaluating it as a very good.

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