

Aliya Takirova: Reproductive Health Patterns in post-Soviet Central Asian Countries

Review of the supervisor

The master thesis primarily addresses reproductive health patterns of post-soviet Central Asian countries. The topic is first examined from a broad perspective and focuses on comparing global trends of maternal mortality (including related factors) in different regions and countries worldwide. Later, maternal mortality issues in Central Asia are presented. The main contribution of the master thesis consists of a detailed analysis of pregnancy outcomes in Kazakhstan (based on Demographic and Health Survey).

The master thesis numbers 108 pages and is composed of four topical chapters (Global trends in maternal mortality, Maternal mortality in Central Asia, Reproductive health patterns and country grouping in different regions, and Pregnancy analysis in Kazakhstan). The most innovative chapter is the last one focusing on thorough and advanced statistical analysis of DHS data of Kazakhstan. The whole work is divided into seven chapters including the introduction, literature overview, data, and methodology. In the analytical part, the author used descriptive/simple statistical indicators as well as more advanced multidimensional regression modeling (Poisson and multinomial logistic) and cluster analysis approach. The critical review of data quality is examined as well (subchapter 3.4 or chapter 4).

In principle, the author, Aliya Takirova, showed the ability to seriously address the topic and to answer her research questions as well as to verify the hypotheses. The master thesis is well organized and logically structured. The text is clearly written. There are only a few shortcomings: p.25, 52: FYR Macedonia instead TFYR Macedonia; page 44: “*Data available for Tajikistan is, unfortunately, was available..*”. table 11 page 44: how was percentage computed?; why do the percentages in tables 12 and 13 have no decimal, while in the previous tables (10 or 11) the results are shown with one or two decimals. Despite those little technical omissions, the author, Aliya Takirova, proved by the proposed master thesis the ability to delimit the topic, to use appropriate methods and more specifically to comment well on the results; therefore I recommend the proposed master thesis to be accepted.

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