MASTER THESIS REVIEW

Type of review: Opponent's review

Author: Edona Begu

Title: Pre-university Educational System and inequalities in Kosovo

Author of review: Rokia Aidahis Aberra

The master's thesis presented by Edona Begu looks at inequalities in educational and labour market outcomes in relation to the educational system of Kosovo. Its overall goal is to understand the institutional settings of the pre-university education system in the country and its impacts in inequalities.

The issue for Kosovo as a newly recognized country could be an addition to the literature. With advanced information and data systems, however, there are better statistical methods and methods of data analysis in the current literature that could have been adopted by the author.

The research attempted to address three clearly defined research questions:
1. What type of education system Kosovo has (standardized/ unstandardized and stratified/un-stratified?
2. Do vocational schools differ from general schools in terms of opportunities for students (educational opportunities and educational outcomes and labour market opportunities)?
3. What type of inequalities does the education system in Kosovo generate (inequalities in education and labour market outcomes and inequalities in social status)?

The author used critical document review (review of quite a number of strategic documents and policy instruments) and secondary data analysis (from reports of Ministry of Education, Science and Technology; Kosovo Agency of Statistics; and PISA 2015 results) to answer the research questions.

The Allmendinger's framework (1989) of standardization and stratification is used in the thesis. The student clearly defined, and explained the theory of standardization and stratification. Furthermore, she has demonstrated, to some extent, proper application of the theory on answering the research questions.

The first research question of the thesis deals with typifying and analysing the role that the educational system has in reproducing inequality in Kosovo. The student has applied

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1/2

the criteria used by the framework and typified Kosovo's educational system as standardized and stratified. Her analysis shows that she has gone through rigorous efforts to review the numerous documents to come up with the conclusion that Kosovo exhibits standardized and stratified educational system.

Regarding addressing the second and third research questions, the student has attempted to look at the issue with available data in spite of lack of cohort data that could possibly answer the question more thoroughly. The data source and the analysis lacked to show adequate evidence that could rule out other possibilities that might have caused the result.

The study mainly depended on Allmendinger's work of 1989 empirical study and showed inadequate recent studies that used the framework.

The text is well-written and structured, but it deserves another round of comprehensive proof reading to eliminate some flaws, to do proper reference citation and minimize redundant ideas.

With the above comments, I recommend the thesis for defence and evaluate it between "very good and excellent".

June 12, 2017   Rokia Aidahis Aberra
  Date: Signature: