

Opponent's Assessment of a Doctoral Thesis

Zhaniya Karmenova: Changing patterns of marital and reproductive behavior of young women in the urban settlement (on the example of Ust-Kamenogorsk, East Kazakhstan oblast, Kazakhstan)

The main goal of this doctoral thesis is the description and analysis of changes in marital and reproduction behavior in Kazakhstan in recent decades after the breakup of the Soviet Union and the proclamation of Kazakhstan's independence. It is a very interesting, reasonable and important research question.

The thesis is divided into four main chapters. First chapter presents theoretical background. It contains overview of the literature, definitions and description of methods and data sources used for analysis. The history of marriage in Kazakhstan is also mentioned.

The second chapter describes changes of basic trends in marital and reproductive behavior in Kazakhstan especially in the period after the collapse of the Soviet Union and since Kazakhstan's independence. Not only demographic but also socio-economic factors are taken into account as well as the differences between regions, between rural and urban population and between Kazakh and Russian nations.

The main contribution of the author is the third chapter. It involves a very particular analysis of Kazakhs and Russian youths living in Ust-Kamenogorsk city towards marriage and childbirths based on results of author's special surveys. It must be appreciated that not only ethnicity and age but also duration of city residence are taken into account. Education level is investigated not only of the respondents but also of their partners and their parents is investigated as well as occupation of the partners and very other important economic and social characteristics are taken into consideration. The factors impacting the youth preferences were analyzed by logistic regression method.

The fourths chapter is dedicated to a basic analysis of the possible impact of public policy on the family institute in Kazakhstan.

The list of references is very rich, the theses is written in excellent English and has good structure with clarity.

On the other hand I have some critical remarks

- The methodology chapter should contain the definition of urban population in Kazakhstan.
- It would be useful to present not only cross-section but also cohort fertility indicators (complete fertility for selected cohorts etc.). But data for such analysis were probably not available.
- In the table of FREQ procedure (p. 55) it is not clear why the education level of husband (2, 3, 4, 8) are so different from education levels of wife (1, 2, 3, 4, 5). This example could be removed to the chapter 3.
- Figure 3 (p. 67). The values of GDP per capita at early nineties close to zero seem to be strange as well as the 60% growth of GDP per capita in 2010.
- Fig. 5 (p. 69). It would be useful to comment the rapid drop of income in KZT in 2009 and to explain why the value of income in KZT since 2009 is “lower” than its value in USD.
- Page 80. The last sentence of the last paragraph (*Since 2000 the flow of migrants out of the Kazakhstan has declined, but net migration rate still remains negative.*) should be moved to the following paragraph concerning the third stage. The net migration remains negative only until 2003, later it was positive or close to zero.
- Page 82. Last paragraph. It should be mentioned what is the reason of low proportion of males since 15 years.
- Figure 15 (p. 83). The minus sign in the horizontal axis can be removed by appropriate formatting of the axis.
- Table 6 (p. 74). The values can be partly affected by the age structure of females of reproductive age. It would be better to use age specific fertility rates by parity (but probably they were not available).
- Table 7 (p. 91). The values can be partly affected by the number of marriages in previous 20 years.
- Figures 22a and 22b (p. 92) do not probably show employment level but structure of employed people by gender.
- Table 8 (p. 94). The values are affected by the age structure of population of reproductive age.
- Tables 13, 14, 17, 21, 32a, 32b. The list of categories below the tables should be numbered.

- Figures 28a, 28b (p. 118) did not show the planned number of children but the distribution of planning the next child in three years. It is surprising that both figures show the same values and that about 65% of females with 3 children plan to have next child in 3 years.
- Fig. 31a, 31b (p. 127) display probably identical values

It would be better to rearrange the text in such a way that tables (including remarks) should not be divided into two pages.

Despite this minor deficiencies I think that the thesis is very good and satisfies the requirements for doctoral thesis.

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