Opponent review of the Doctoral thesis:

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

Transformation of family and fertility behaviour during the recent period in Kazakhstan is an appropriate topic for dissertation. The core research question: Differentiation of marital and reproductive behaviour in Kazakhstan: the impact of ethnic structure or the growth of urbanization? - is relevant research question. The introductory chapter is relatively comprehensive and provides sufficient clarification of the topic. The main goal is to explain the difference of reproductive behaviour of two main ethnicities of Kazakhstan and their influence on each other. The proposed hypothesis is that Kazakhs have been less influenced by Russian majority, thus they have more traditional behaviour that "russified" Kazakhs and Russians. This hypothesis is based on the assumption that the mass migration of rural inhabitants to satellite towns made the marital and reproductive behaviour of towns more traditional. It is expected that a process of ruralisation is taking place in cities.

Thesis has the logical and consistent structure of four chapters. The first chapter on Theoretical framework is sufficiently informative as regards the overview of the literature, definition of terms, data sources and methods. Although the main theoretical frameworks – demographic transition and second demographic transition – as well as other concepts like theory of fertility supply-demand and theory of planned behaviour are referred to, the more recent studies that are particularly relevant for post-communist countries are missing. "Economic uncertainty" or even "economic crisis" are concepts more suitable for explanation of fertility drop in the 1990s (see for example Billingsley, S. 2010: The post-communist fertility puzzle. Population Research and Policy Review). Secondly, description of data sources is adequately presented, however, calculation of SMAM (on page 51) is included despite it is not used in the thesis.

The second chapter is devoted to description of socio-economic situation and demographic trends. This chapter is rather comprehensive, however, there is an inconsistence that was referred to in the opponent review on the part of Doctoral thesis for the State doctoral examination but it was not clarified in the final thesis. In Figure 3 it is unclear that GDP starts at 0 in 1991, however, in the text it is written that by 1995 real GDP dropped to 61.4% of its 1990 level. Interestingly, sub-chapter on Signs of Second demographic Transition in Kazakhstan is included – it is questioned to which extent is the concept of the second demographic transition relevant explanatory framework for trends in fertility and nuptiality in Kazakhstan.

The core of the work is the third chapter devoted to analysis of marital and reproductive behaviour of young women in Ust-Kamenogorsk based on survey data. In the subchapter 1.4 there is information that two groups of data sources were used in the thesis, i.e. results of data processing of the social surveys in 2009 and 2016 in Ust-Kamenogorsk. She wanted to profit with the repeated surveys in 2002, 2009 and 2016 to monitor the progress in transition of reproductive behaviour. However, the samples of 2009 and 2016 surveys were narrowed to only 480 respondents aged 18-29 years which did not allow the relevant comparative study with survey in 2002. Nevertheless, results of data processing of the survey 2009 were not presented in the tables. *Could you comment how the data from survey 2009 were used?*

Following the aim of the research four main respondent groups were analysed: Kazakhs born in Ust-Kamenogorsk, Russians born in Ust-Kamenogorsk, Kazakhs which moved to Ust-Kamenogorsk before the age 10 and after the age 10 (what about those who moved in the age of 10?). Division of women into three age groups (18-21, 22-24, 25-29) was also adequately explained. Binary logistic regression was used to model probability being married (table 35) and to model probability having children (table 36). The possible weakness of provided analysis of survey data was explained as the main limitations of the research were given in the introduction. The young age of the respondents and the relatively short segment of their lives covered by the survey limited the ability to examine higher-order births and marriages. Thus, available data do not allow more detail comparison and more general conclusions regarding recent trends in marital and reproductive behaviour.

Finally, all the results given in the thesis suggest that it is not easy task to answer the core question on differentiation of marital and reproductive behaviour in Kazakhstan – whether it is the impact of ethnic structure or the growth of urbanization. Despite the clear-cut answer cannot be given *could you summarize the main findings that support the effect of ethnic structure rather than the effect of urbanization*?

Zhaniya Karmenova has proved the ability to make a research using various methods and bringing relevant interpretation as well as to comment results with good level of knowledge of specific topic. She used readable English and ideas can be easily to follow. Despite the comments above the submitted work meets the criteria for the Doctoral thesis, therefore, I recommend the Doctoral thesis to be defended.

11 September 2017   Doc. RNDr. Jiřina Kocourková, Ph.D.