



REVIEW OF DIPLOMA THESIS

Review type: Opponent's Review

Author of the diploma thesis: Najmin Kamilsoy

Title: Anti-Corruption Policy Gap: The Case of Azerbaijan

Author of the review: Fawzi Haddad

Evaluate the diploma thesis based on the following considerations (not necessarily in this order):

1) *Factual benefits of work and its added value;*

This thesis written by the author has many factual benefits:

-A very clear explanation of the situation of Azerbaijan helps the reader who knows anything of this situation before, to understand the corrupted ground of Azerbaijan.

-The author has very well discussed the characteristics of systemic corruption in Azerbaijan, as well as the comparative study between Singapore and Georgia, was a fruitful way to present the successful cases of combating corruption.

-This master thesis showed us in a clear way the reasons for the failure of an anti-corruption policy.

-After analyzing the nature and the type of corruption in general and after specifying the corruption situation in Azerbaijan, the author concludes the difference of corruption's nature from one country to other, and before introducing a policy to fight against with effective means, it is essential to have a clear view of where the problem is rooted.

2) *Setting and answering research questions;*

After analyzing primary and secondary sources and after showing the applied methods, the author mentioned clearly the research questions:

-Why do anti-corruption measures fail in under systemic corruption?

- What are the shortcomings of the principal-agent framework in the fight against corruption?



- Is corruption systemic in Azerbaijan?

- What are the reasons for the lack of success of anti-corruption initiatives in Azerbaijan?

In my point of view, the author through his study answered perfectly the research questions after selecting the sources and elaborating a coherent theoretical background, applying the methodological process and synthesizing the findings.

3) *Structure of work;*

In my point of view, the author's research is very coherent. In other words, this thesis mentioned four clear and strict research questions and the structure of work supports the arguments answering these research questions. As well, each section of this thesis performed its proper function and each section logically and coherently developed the study purpose. As well, ideas are easy to follow and links are logical. Finally, the first three parts of this thesis created a structured map for the case study.

Again, the author through this structure of work convinced me that he has chosen a doable and worthwhile research project. He satisfied me that he can explain what he did and why. He assured that he knows and has accomplished the most of the technical research processes required and persuaded me that he has made a contribution.

4) *The factual accuracy and convincing of the argumentation;*

The writer was content that factual accuracy is very important in this research. As well, there's an obvious argument that factual accuracy is especially important in this study because it is purportedly based on a country situation and historical and political events. The factual accuracy and convincing of the argumentation appeared in many points:

-The detailed elaboration to define the systemic type of corruption in Azerbaijan

-The comparative approaches with two different countries: Singapore and Georgia

-The historical developments that shaped the current economic, political and social environment as well as the institutional framework.

-Use an important data from many international sources (transparency international, world bank, OECD, UNCAC, ...) what helps us to bring evidence to the fact that there has not been any significant improvement since the introduction of major anti-corruption policy in the country

-The anti-corruption policy evaluation and the elaboration that the scope of these efforts have remained highly disproportionate to the level of progress achieved in the elimination of corruption in the country.

All these points confirmed that Mr Kamilsoy, showed us a very good level of accuracy and convincing of the argumentation but it was a plus if he added many practical cases and corrupted barriers that Azerbaijan citizens confronts in his daily life.



5) *Sophistication and application of theoretical approaches;*

In this research, the author refers to “principal-agent theory” as the main foundation for the anti-corruption activities around the world, mainly due to the general understanding of corruption as a main principal-agent problem. The author clarifies exactly the purpose of this theory before discussing critical approaches concerning the application of this model. We must mention that through this theory, the author created an explicit statement of the theoretical assumption that permit us to evaluate them critically. This chosen theory helps the author to formulate the goals in the terminology of the chosen theory. Finally, this chosen theory was rejected as the main foundation for anti-corruption activities in Azerbaijan. In my opinion, the theoretical framework used by the author was coherent, but it excludes “corruption frequency” which is an important element in systemic corruption study.

6) *Methodological approach and application of particular methods and approaches;*

As it's clear in this research, the author conducted an explanatory qualitative research based on the analysis of primary and secondary data. The main source of data collection was already existing literature, policy document and reports relevant to the topic. Through this method, the author tried to identify the gap between the environment and practice. This research methodology faced many challenges especially in terms of data collection because very little research exists about the level of corruption in Azerbaijan due to the authoritarian environment in this country. We can't deny that the author tried his best to apply efficiently the chosen methodology ,but in my point of view a mixed methods research in this study can provide a more complete and comprehensive understanding of the research problem than either quantitative or qualitative approach alone, as well, it can help to explain findings or how causal process work.

7) *Use of literature and data;*

The author uses well the literature in his study what gives him a theoretical base for his research and help him to determine its nature. The author by mentioning in details the historical development that shaped the current economic situation political and social environment as well as the institutional framework, helps us to understand how corrupt policies and institutions evolves in Azerbaijan and creates a landscape giving us a full understanding of the corruption situation in this post-soviet country.

As well, we cannot deny that the author use an important data from many international sources (transparency international, world bank, ..) what helps us to bring evidence to the fact that there has not been any significant improvement since the introduction of major anti-corruption policy in the country ,but in my opinion the author can develop more his data collection through interviews what can improve and maintain the integrity of research ,improve the accurately of the finding and validate the study.



8) *Stylistic and text editing (quote, text layout, etc.).*

Concerning the stylistic, it was good and fair enough, or the author conveys effectively the meaning by improving paragraph and sentence construction and by improving the word choice. , as well he ensured logical connections and ensured that transitions between sentences and between paragraphs are smooth and support the coherent development of the text as a whole. Concerning text editing, the author respected the word hit and the required level of academic writing as well he presented his material in a clear and logical order, he respected the standard of referencing and appropriate content under appropriate headings. My only remark is that the standard of spelling and grammar was weak and needs to be improved.

For the above reasons, I recommend the diploma thesis for the defense.

My grading is B – very good.

Date: 30/08/2019

Signature: Fawzi Haddad