



REVIEW OF DIPLOMA THESIS

Review type: Supervisor's Review

Author of the diploma thesis: Laura Yawaa Tofoatsi

Title: The Impact of Maternity Protection on Exclusive Breastfeeding: A Case Study of Ghana

Author of the review: Mgr. Eva M. Hejzlarová, Ph.D.

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

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

Laura has set herself a very interesting, under-explored and public policy relevant topic. Among other qualities of the text, I highly appreciate the multi-layered nature of the thesis – although the primary topic is exclusive breastfeeding (EBF), the author uses it as a lens to go deeper into the topic of maternity protection/support, both from the state and employers, and the specific possibilities of their support. The thesis also captures the experience of the covid-19 pandemic, which the author uses to suggest the potential that working from home has in relation to EBF. It reveals the interconnection and interaction between health policy issues (especially reproductive health issues), social protection issues and labor market. From my perspective, the thesis is sophisticated and thoughtful, with a significant added value – both academic and practical.

2) *Setting and answering research questions*

Laura stated the objectives¹, research questions² and hypotheses³ properly. The diploma thesis respects the objectives and related operationalization and provides answers to the

¹ “The Specific objectives to be covered by the thesis are to (a) To identify the prevailing rate of exclusive breast feeding among corporate mothers. (b) Assess the impact of the availability of breastfeeding facilities at their workplaces (which has been proposed as a solution) on the decision of working mothers to practice six months exclusive breastfeeding. (c) Assess the impact of the work from home practice on mothers' choice of breastfeeding practice.” (p. 9)

² “In order to achieve the above stated objective, the study utilized the following research questions as guiding tool: (a) What is the prevailing rate of exclusive breast feeding among corporate mothers? (b) What is the impact of the availability of breastfeeding facilities at their workplaces (which has been proposed as a solution) on the decision of working mothers to practice six months exclusive breastfeeding? (c) What is the impact of the work from home practice on mothers' choice of breastfeeding practice?” (p. 9)

³ “The research questions have led to the formulation of hypotheses, which are presented in their null forms to facilitate statistical analysis and testing. This thesis hypothesizes that: (a) H0: Mothers who have longer maternity leave (at least 6 months) are more likely to engage in the six months exclusive breastfeeding as recommended by WHO. (b) H0: Organizations that provide infrastructure to facilitate breastfeeding have more mothers who engage in the recommended 6 months exclusive breastfeeding. (c) H0: Mothers who worked from home due to the covid-19 pandemic practiced longer exclusive breastfeeding.” (p. 10)



questions. The only limitation regarding the hypotheses is the sample – best available and sufficient for the scope of diploma thesis yet doubtful from a strictly scientific perspective.

3) *Structure of work*

The structure of the diploma thesis is logical and clear. In the Introduction the research problem, objectives, research questions and hypotheses of the diploma thesis are formulated. Next, a Literature review is provided in Chapter 2, which includes the theoretical framing, specifically Gendered Organization Theory. Chapter 3 describes and explains the methodology. Chapter 4 sums up Results and Discussion. Chapter 5 offers Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations. The thesis is further divided into subchapters to facilitate orientation in the text. I am used to including some sections (e.g. limitations of the research) in the methodology section, but more important than where the section is located is that the author reflects on it.

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

The accuracy of the data and related interpretation is high and argumentation is convincing. I did not find any false or misleading statement.

5) *Sophistication and application of theoretical approaches;*

Gendered Organization Theory was well selected and is well elaborated. Perhaps, some more theoretical background providing explanation about the interplay of market, state and individual would be also useful.

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

Laura justifies her research design, population, sampling techniques, data description, reliability, ethical issues, and data analysis techniques. I have no reservation neither regarding the description and explanation nor the analysis. The limitations of the sample are acknowledged.

7) *Use of literature and data*

The amount of the literature and the existing research incorporated in the thesis is exceptionally broad and meets the demands placed on theses convincingly. The thesis is a valuable review of EBF literature.

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

Stylistically and formally, the thesis is on a good level.

9) *Control on plagiarism*

Plagiarism checker Turnitin indicated the similarity of 29%. Most of these similarities had less than 1% match with estimated original documents. During the manual control, I did not find any longer phrase (usually, it was just a few common words) or any signal that a substantive part of the work was cited inappropriately or taken over from other source. I had a chance to follow Laura throughout her work, read emerging chapters of the diploma thesis consequently and have no indication her approach, thoughts or analysis were a result of an unethical behaviour.



10) Questions for defense (not obligatory)

- a. Can you focus more on the interplay of market, state and individual explaining more thoroughly the dynamics and (power) relations?
- b. Try to critically evaluate the EBF concept and its definition – what are its analytical (and other) advantages and disadvantages? Would you perhaps any suggestions how to modify the concept?
- c. Will you continue to work with the results of your research in Ghana? If so, how? And what expectations do you have?

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

My grading is “A”/“B”.

Date: May 28, 2023

Signature: