



REVIEW OF DIPLOMA THESIS

Review type: Supervisor's Review

Author of the diploma thesis: Jesús Arturo Medina Varela

Title: Equity Policies in Tertiary Education, The Case of the Universidad Autónoma Chapingo, Mexico. Analysis from Public Policies Theories

Author of the review: Prof. Arnošt Veselý

Master's thesis of Jesús Arturo Medina Varela is a rather extensive project. It aims at providing in-depth analysis of case study *Universidad Autónoma Chapingo* (UACH) from the perspective of advocacy coalition framework. So first of all, I must appreciate courage of the student to take the topic so complexly. Also, it is clear that much effort has been made to include as many information as possible and writing the thesis certainly has taken a lot of time.

The thesis is divided into four main parts and includes all required elements (theory, methodology, empirical part), and the motivation of the student to put together many different aspects of the problem should be appreciated. However, the structuration of the thesis (and labelling of the chapters) is a bit puzzling. More detailed and clearer structuration (including labelling and numbering of the chapters) would help the reader to orient better in argumentation. For instance, methodology is described in Chapter 4, and not under clear title.

The added value of the thesis is mainly twofold. First, it is an in-depth analysis of case study UACH. UACH is an internationally interesting case because it demonstrates that it is possible to provide equal educational opportunities to young people with disadvantaged status while still to maintain high-quality educational standards. Second added value is a strong theoretical foundation in ACF theory and careful connecting the theory with the case study.



The choice of ACF as a theoretical framework is carefully explained and justified. I appreciate that the author describe also limits of the approach. Nevertheless, after reading the thesis, I still have doubts that ACF is the best theory to explain UACH case. It sometimes seems as if the theory determines the empirical analysis. For instance, based on ACF theory, the author assumes two coalitions. However, the provided empirical evidence suggests more nuanced and complicated classification of actors. More importantly, the final explanation why the change in UACH happened (e.g., policy entrepreneur) is found in factors that are highlighted more in theories other than ACF. However, it is an author's right to choose his favourite perspective.

Empirical analysis of UACH is carefully accomplished, although methodology used should be described in more detail. Most importantly, a reader would be interested in how the interviews were conducted and analysed. On the other hand, I strongly appreciate analysis of the context of the UACH as well as comparison with other universities. I similarly value that the case is not described as "black and white", and the tension between promoting equity and maintaining academic excellence is acknowledged.

As formal aspects of the thesis, the most important omission is missing page numbering. The format for references is not uniform and standard. Some references cited in text are not in bibliography (e.g., Heywood 2012). The references for journal articles, for instance, should be provided in full. The language of the thesis is clear, though careful proof-read by English native would be very useful. The thesis includes only relatively few typing errors, and in general, the thesis has been written very carefully, and again I stress that I appreciate the motivation and effort of the student,



Questions for defence:

- 1) After completing your thesis, do you still think that ACF is the best public policy theory to explain UACH case?
- 2) Why the change realized in UACH has not happened also in other universities?
Is it likely to happen in the future? Why?

For the above reasons, I recommend the diploma thesis for the defense. My suggested grading is "B".

Date:

Signature: