



Report on the part of the final state examination Record of the thesis defence

Academic year: 2023/2024

Student's name and surname: Samina Noergaard
Student's ID: 20590396

Type of the study programme: Master's (post-Bachelor)
Study programme: Sociology of Contemporary Societies with specialisation in Identities, Health and Bodies

Study ID: 752719

Title of the thesis: Women's experience of gynecological examinations: embodiment and malpractice in care
Thesis department: Department of Sociology (23-KS)
Language of the thesis: English
Language of defence: English
Advisor: Mgr. Ema Hrešanová, Ph.D.
Reviewer(s): PhDr. Mgr. Jaroslava Hasmanová Marhánková, Ph.D.
Date of defence: 16.09.2024 **Venue of defence:** Praha
Attempt: regular

Course of the examination: The committee was informed of the results of the control of the originality of the work.

The student was greeted, the committee was introduced. The supervisor and the opponent are both present. The student uses visual presentation. She presents her topic, research questions (+ mentions significance of her research in social studies), methodology, the difficulties she encountered upon entering the terrain, mainly the language barrier, and how she tries to overcome them, the process of conducting participant observation and semi-structured interviews. Then she continues by presenting findings (for example the lack of emotional care from the attending practitioner, or the influence of power imbalance in the relationship doctor/patient). Then she moves on to talking about gynecology more broadly from a sociological perspective.

The student speaks clearly, fluently and confidently.

Then the supervisor speaks and summarizes her review of the thesis. She generally speaks very highly of the work, the only weaknesses she sees in the slight repetitiveness of the text and that she was a bit puzzled by the anonymising measures used (she was not aware that the names were pseudonyms for example). Then she reads the comments as noted in the written review:

"Could you tell us whether you have had the opportunity to consult your MA thesis with your interlocutors and what their responses were? I am especially interested in the medical doctors'

view and in the ethical approval concerned."

After that the opponent summarizes his review and highlights comments for discussion: "For the thesis defence, two key topics would be particularly relevant for discussion: 1) Ethical Aspects of the Research: A critical discussion on the ethical dimensions of the research is essential, especially focusing on informed consent and language barriers and 2) the role of the socioeconomic status, language barriers, positions as a migrant or foreigner of the interviewed women on their experiences. How might these factors contribute to their privileges or vulnerabilities during gynaecological examinations?"

Student's response: 1) I agree with this critique, I was limited by the language barrier so I could not really speak with the women that were examined, i did not have the time or resources to obtain a suitable interpreter, so I mainly spoke with the doctors, I could only read the bodily reactions of the women examined.
2) Only some women have the opportunity to choose a private clinic over a public one, so that limits the type of participants in my research.

Committee questions:

What is said in the literature about the experience of pain in public/private clinics?

Student's response: There is a lot of research that points to women having a better experience at the private clinic (competition on the market), there is better equipment that is better prepared, there is still the experience of pain but the patients are more confident that the doctor can solve the problem.

The committee deliberates:

The supervisor is asked about the informed consent with the doctors vs. the informants, she says that the student sometimes was not allowed by the doctors to ask the women for consent, and that she had oral consent when she could. Member of the committee highlights that such issues with informed consent can be problematic, but the supervisor says that the student was very ethical in her conduct to her knowledge. The ethical questions are suggested as the main issue that might influence the grade. The supervisor states that it is impossible sometimes to get a signed copy of an informed consent so she does not see it as an issue. Main thing is that she got a signed consent from the medical practitioner. The committee deliberates and takes some time to decide between A and B, the opinions differ, there is a long discussion about ethics and methodology in medical environment, the politics of ethnographic research, the official guidelines, etc., but finally the committee settles on the grade A.

Result of defence:	excellent (A)	
Chair of the board:	Testa Alessandro, doc., Ph.D. (present)
Committee members:	Jeřábek Hynek, prof. PhDr., CSc. (present)
	Hrůzová Andrea, Mgr., Ph.D. (present)
	Soukup Petr, PhDr. Ing., Ph.D. (present)