

Opinion review on the dissertation thesis:

Title: Quality of Life as a Useful Indicator for Decision Making Processes of Public Administration at the Regional Level

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Theoretical background and topicality of the thesis:

This dissertation deals with the assessment of the quality of life and its impact on regional development and human needs. In the theoretical part, the author discussed various approaches to quality of life, mainly from a historical point of view and based on crucial authors (Galbraith, Rostow). At the same time, both economic, sociological and philosophical approaches to the concept are perceived, against the background of the transition from industrial to the post-industrial or digital society, respectively. Indeed, the topic of quality of life, wellbeing and happiness is highly inspected and determining political and economic decisions. Therefore, the the problem is appropriately chosen and in line with global research trends. In the second part, the author evaluates approaches to measuring the quality of life, especially using indices and relating to both objective and subjective quality of life.

Methodology:

The part 2.3. Methods used for solving research problems and tasks, in my opinion, is not the optimal, yet each thesis contains analysis and synthesis, and it is strange to call them methods; it is similar with the "comparison" method, induction and deduction. Those are more investigative approaches than methods. What makes sense, to specify methods of analysis (breaking down into components), or methods of synthesis (put elements or components into a consistent whole) but not to consider analysis or synthesis as methods.

Figure 1 is clear, but the methodology should provide more detailed reasoning questions as well as the methods used as the most appropriate for the further research. A description of the methodological approach is further explained in chapter 3 as an algorithm (simplified flowchart), or structural-logical representation of the procedure, that is understandable. In the case of composite indices, errors are often made such as an inconsistent definition of a multidimensional term; purposeful selection of variables; or underestimation of the effect of their correlation. However, the author deals with the construction of the index in detail and

justifies her steps, which is a positive aspect of her work. Although, in the end, the choice of "life satisfaction" is not warranted, it is only chosen (page 59).

Results:

The construction of the index examines the correlation of the life satisfaction index with selected variables, taking into account the correlation index for the selected countries. Individual variables are tested for feasibility as baseline indicators. The procedure for accepting a variable is such that if there is sufficient correlation in the most countries, the variable is chosen as feasible. This reasoning is not sufficiently explained. The Fuller method is simple, but the author does not adequately explain the background and the role of Ukrainian and Czech experts in determining weights.

In the last part, based on the values of variables in different countries, recommendations for Ukraine are made. These proposals are relatively general and take little account of their implementation and feasibility in the context of the Ukrainian economy and society. Therefore, the impression of superficiality is created.

Comments and Questions:

1. In work, some references contain errors or are in two language mutations that limit their verification (Todorov source 1960 is missing, Druker versus Drucker, Galbraith versus Gelbreit, Rostow versus Rostou). It would be better to cite the source in the original language and add a note of the Russian mutation. Many citations are in Russian, so I was unable to verify the sources and content of several publications written in Russian. Table 2 contains actually only Russian-language authors in the list of definitions, which seems strange and unbalanced to me. By the way, it might be useful to compare whether the English and Russian publication trees perceive the term equally. Is there any substantial difference eventually?
2. You state that "as a result, the indicator" life satisfaction "was selected (page 59). It is not clear based on which parameters the decision to use" life satisfaction "was made. Can you explain and justify this choice?
3. Testing for feasibility: what would it mean if a variable is significantly correlated with life satisfaction in all countries? What is the interpretation of such an ideal situation?

Statement:

Overall, I evaluate more positively the theoretical part of the work, the reasoning on a proper definition of the term quality of life and the study and use of extensive literature and presentation in tabular form. Working with the index uses relatively simple methods, mostly correlation coefficients. The used testing process led to the identification of the so-called baseline indicators using data on CEE countries.

The PhD. student demonstrated her capacity to develop a theoretical concept and to bring some own results, and the thesis meets the basic requirements of the dissertation. I recommend submitting the presented dissertation for the defence and to award Mgr. Tetiana Korovchenko the Ph.D. degree.

Košice, 03.07. 2020

Ass. prof. Ing. Nataša Urbančíková, PhD.