

## SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR'S REFERENCE

<b>Program:</b>	Master in International Business
<b>Student:</b>	Yulia Sinitskaya
<b>Title of thesis:</b>	Culture-Based Approach to Understanding Consumer Behavior: Comparison of Russian and Chinese Consumers

**Justification of the topic choice. Accuracy in defining the aim and objectives of the thesis.** Justification of the topic choice; accuracy in defining the aim and tasks of the thesis; originality of the topic and the extent to which it was covered; alignment of the thesis' topic, aim and objectives.

The aim of the thesis is formulated as identification of differences between consumers in two dynamically developing economies – Russia and China. Despite obvious practical relevance of the topic, there are hardly any studies aiming to compare consumer behavior in these two countries. Consumer behavior is compared on the basis of analysis of the role of values and needs, their classification and the impact on various aspects of consumer behavior.

**Structure and logic of the text flow.** Logic of research; full scope of the thesis; alignment of thesis' structural parts, i.e. theoretical and empirical parts.

Structure of the thesis corresponds with the research aim and objectives. The first part is devoted to theoretical analysis, alignment of existing theory and analysis of research results of similar studies in other countries. Later are presented detailed description of methodology and results of the empirical study, as well as research implications. Comparative studies require particular attention to the methodology, which is in the due form presented in the paper.

**Quality of analytical approach and quality of offered solution to the research objectives.** Adequacy of objectives coverage; ability to formulate and convey the research problem; ability to offer options for its solution; application of the latest trends in relevant research are for the set objectives.

Aim and objectives of the study have been formulated in the proper way. This study has required an in-depth analysis of existing studies on both countries, on the way the constructs of values, needs and behaviour have been defined, conceptualized, and operationalized. The contribution the study is making is both theoretical and empirical.

**Quality of data gathering and description.** Quality of selecting research tools and methods; data validity adequacy; adequacy of used data for chosen research tools and methods; completeness and relevance of the list of references.

Data collection for the study deserves particular comments. Author has both developed, verified, translated questionnaire both in Russian and Chinese. Primary data was collected in both countries, samples were verified and compared on the base of pre-defined quotas. This approach to data collection is appropriate even for journal publications in the academic sphere and meets all the requirements.

**Scientific aspect of the thesis.** Independent scientific thinking in solving the set problem/objectives; the extent to which the student contributed to selecting and justifying the research model (conceptual and/or quantitative), developing methodology/approach to set objectives.

Scientific aspect of the study is very strong and is reflected both in theoretical and practical part of the thesis. Author has demonstrated independent thinking in approaching, defining and solving the problem.

**Practical/applied nature of research.** Extent to which the theoretical background is related to the international or Russian managerial practice; development of applied recommendations; justification and interpretation of the empirical/applied results.

Besides scientific importance, the topic has particular importance from the practical perspective – both for Russian and international companies. Suggested implications are well described and justified.

**Quality of thesis layout.** Layout fulfils the requirements of the Regulations for master thesis preparation and defence, correct layout of tables, figures, references.

The thesis layout is executed according to MIB program requirements.

The Master thesis of Yulia Sinitskaya meets the requirements for master thesis of MIB program thus the author of the thesis can be awarded the required degree.

Date September, 26<sup>th</sup> 2011



Scientific Advisor: *Associate Professor Maria M. Smirnova*