

SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR'S REFERENCE

Program:	Master in International Business
Student:	Konstantin Shutov
Title of thesis:	Influence of mall attributes and demographic factors on Russian consumers' mall involvement behavior

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.*

According to Russia's GKS during last decade growth rate of retail sales was rather high. As a result of retail trade growth a numerous shopping malls appeared all over the country. At the same time during the last couple of years growth rate of retail trade in Russia started to decrease. So the competition between retailers started to increase. Subsequently, shopping malls started to fight for customer's attraction. That's why the topic which Konstantin Shutov has chosen for his master's thesis is really relevant.

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.*

The logic of the paper is rather modest: introduction, methodology, results and conclusion. In general it seems to me that the structure of the paper and its logic correspond to each other. But no more than that.

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.*

Konstantin Shutov's paper is in some sense an independent research. At the same time it is worth to mention that the philosophy which is developed in his paper is mainly based on ideas that were published and tested by some Indian researchers. The Shutov's research tried to enlarge the model by adding new shopping mall attributes. Doing so he managed, firstly, to increase reliability of the model, and secondly, to improve its ability to explain consumers' mall involvement in regard of demographic factors and mall attributes.

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.*

The coverage of objectives is quite adequate. Despite topic's complexity the research problem is formulated clearly. The related to the topic main trends are analysed and applied to the research.

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.*

The research tools and methods are selected properly. Regression and factor analysis was conducted to identify influence of shopping mall's attributes and demographic factors on consumers' mall. The list of basic references is attached.

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.*

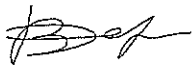
According to the author, research results “identify importance of interior and design, socializing, entertainment, and ambience factors for consumers”. “Creating more places for social activities, - as Shutov writes, - paying attention for interior and design of a mall with introducing new entertainment activities together with keeping temperature and lighting on comfort level for consumers will make them more involved the mall. Moreover, stressing out these features of a mall, managers can expect more highly involved customers to visit the mall”.

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

Konstantin Shutov’s paper layout fulfils the requirements of the regulations for master thesis preparation and defence.

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

Scientific advisor: associate professor



Vassily K. Dermanov
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