

SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR'S REFERENCE

Program:	Master in International Business
Student:	Maria Murasheva
Title of thesis:	Analysis of relationship between operational performance and supply chain sustainability: A case of logistics service providers in Finland and Russia

<p>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.</p> <p>Sustainability in supply chains is an emerging topic in management: the publication number is growing and practical initiatives are taken all the time. Maria was involved in the team of international researchers (together with Aalto University, Finland) to study Russian and Finnish logistic service providers and their operational performance and supply chain sustainability. I find the topic very interesting and perspective. The topicality is justified in the introduction.</p>
<p>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.</p> <p>The paper has three major parts (chapters), starting with literature review, followed by methodology analysis and discussion of results. The logic is coherent and text flow is good. Maria's text is often brief but it is always comprehensive.</p>
<p>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.</p> <p>The paper is quite deep analytically and suggests interesting outcomes.</p>
<p>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.</p> <p>One of the strongest aspects of the paper is its research nature. As it was mentioned, the author was involved in a team of international researchers and Maria conducted the interviews in Russia. A big part of Russian results was collected by her personally. All the analysis was made by Maria personally.</p>
<p>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.</p> <p>As a result of international data gathering and research nature of the paper, Maria did very good job in applying scientific methods in her paper. She has independent and interesting ideas, however all these ideas are described very clear and coherent.</p>
<p>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.</p> <p>Due to the specificity of the research, this is one of the weak parts of the paper. Probably, author lacks deeper and wider managerial implications, but this is really minor weakness for quite good analytical paper.</p>
<p>Quality of thesis layout. Layout fulfils the requirements of the Regulations for master thesis preparation and defence, correct layout of tables, figures, references.</p> <p>The layout is done according to the norms and standards in Graduate School of Management of SPbU.</p>

The Master thesis of Maria Murasheva meets the requirements for master thesis of Master in International Business program thus the author of the thesis can be awarded the required degree.

15.06.2015

Associate Professor
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