

REFEREE'S REVIEW

Program:	Master in International Business
Student:	Maria Sandomirskaya
Title of thesis:	Country of Origin effect on Russian Consumers: Evaluation of Label "Made in Italy"

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.	5	<u>4</u>	3	2
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.	5	<u>4</u>	3	2
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.	5	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	2
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.	5	<u>4</u>	3	2
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.	5	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	2
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.	5	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	2
Quality of thesis layout. Layout fulfils the requirements of the Regulations for master thesis preparation and defense, correct layout of tables, figures, references.	5	<u>4</u>	3	2

Each item above is evaluated on the following scale, as applicable: 5 = the thesis meets all the requirements, 4 = the thesis meets almost all the requirements, 3 = a lot of the requirements are not met in the thesis, 2 = the thesis does not meet the requirements.

Additional comments:

The submitted work is devoted to the issue of country of origin effect utilization in marketing. The author provides a thorough analysis of the theoretical background of the concept, discussing the major approaches in defining and measuring the coo effect. The strong sides of the work include the depth of theoretical study, the well thought-out empirical approach and generally good consideration for the methodology.

However, there are certain points that will not allow us to assign an excellent grade to the work.

- 1) The Introduction is not written fully in line with the requirements (it does not contain any explicit statement of the research gap, thesis objectives, object and subject).
- 2) The structure and formatting are also not optimal: some paragraphs are less than 3 pages, the size of the paragraphs is very different. Typos and mistakes in the text prevent from fluent reading. Conclusion cannot be part of the chapter.
- 3) The style of the text in the theoretical background section is
- 4) The choice of the Italian market for the study is not 100% clearly explained. What is so interesting in the "made in Italy" effect that the author focused on it?
- 5) The issue of sanctions is not addressed in the paper at all, whereas this can be an important factor, and that is exactly what one would expect to see in the paper on such topic in the current macroeconomic and political circumstances.
- 6) The reference to emerging markets is done in the Introduction, but the issue remains unaddressed in the paper at all. That way it remains unclear what was the purpose of making the reference.
- 7) The empirical part provokes a number of remarks:

- a. Strangely the structure of the survey is presented before the research question which breaks down the logic of the research design presentation.
- b. Moreover, the author states the hypotheses with the age groups whereas the sample shows a clear bias towards the younger age group. The younger group is three times bigger than the older group. That makes statistical comparisons quite doubtful. The same goes for gender groups comparison.
- c. The author calculates the image variable out of a number of measures, but no factor analysis is ever performed to justify that. Even construct reliability is not checked.
- d. ANOVA statistics are in some cases missing (time provided in the text), e.g. p. 47.

We recommend the author to address these points while defending the paper.

Master thesis of Maria Sandomirskaya meets the requirements of the Master in International Business program, and according to the reviewer's opinion deserves a "good (C)" grade, thus the author can be given the desired degree.

Date June 15, 2015

Referee:

Senior Lecturer, Candidate of Economic Sciences



Olga Alkanova