

## SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR'S REFERENCE

<b>Program:</b>	Master in International Business
<b>Student:</b>	Maria Zhigulina
<b>Title of thesis:</b>	SUPPLY CHAIN ENHANCEMENT IN GROCERY RETAIL UNDER EMBARGO ON AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD PRODUCE: THE CASE OF KESKO FOOD RUS LTD

<p><b>Justification of the topic choice. Accuracy in defining the aim and objectives of the thesis.</b> 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>The topic of supply chain reconfiguration under embargo is very recent and important for Russian companies and international companies working in Russia or with Russian companies, especially for retailers. The aim (research goal) is well-explained in introduction and later described in research questions and tasks. The aim, tasks and topic are aligned.</p>
<p><b>Structure and logic of the text flow.</b> Logic of research; full scope of the thesis; alignment of thesis' structural parts, i.e. theoretical and empirical parts.</p> <p>The paper has four parts (chapters) and logically structured. The structure is explained on page 6. The author starts with literature review and theoretical background. Later research design and case analysis sections appear. All tasks are met in the text.</p>
<p><b>Quality of analytical approach and quality of offered solution to the research objectives.</b> 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 offer interesting solutions. The strong part of the paper is discussion made by author and her personal understanding and interpretation of the results.</p>
<p><b>Quality of data gathering and description.</b> 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>The author worked with one basic company (Kesko Rus) which is normal for the kind of problem she is dealing with.</p>
<p><b>Scientific aspect of the thesis.</b> 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>The paper has practical orientation and, thus, lacks scientific aspects. This is, probably, the major weakness of the paper from my point of view.</p>
<p><b>Practical/applied nature of research.</b> 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>The research is very practical and, from my point of view, interesting for the retail companies in Russia.</p>
<p><b>Quality of thesis layout.</b> 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 Zhigulina meets the requirements for master thesis of Master in International Business program thus the author of the thesis can be awarded the required degree.

13.06.2015

Associate Professor  
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