

SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR'S REFERENCE

Program:	Master in International Business
Student:	Irina Mamedgasanova
Title of thesis:	Market Orientation and Firm Performance: the Case of Russian Companies and International Comparison

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 the influence of market orientation on firm performance. There is no sufficient research base in this area on example of Russian economy, but there are rich research results in various other economies, both developed and developing. Thus addressing this topic Author is providing results, which can be compared with results from other countries, representing an excellent opportunity for international comparisons. The reason for such comparison is use of research instrument for measurement of market orientation that dates back to 1990s, and is till now of the most acknowledged research scales.

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.

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.

Existing in the research literature models are analyzed in the theoretical part, while in empirical part is presented analysis of sample data supported by data from existing databases. Both theoretical foundation of the study and empirical study are of high quality and are accompanied by Author's comments and justification of the selected procedure.

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 used in the empirical part of the thesis has been gathered within a study of Center of Strategic Marketing and Innovation, but additional data collection on the base of financial databases has been conducted by Irina, together with verification of the sample and suggestion on the data analysis. Besides the main model, alternative models have been defined by the Author and tested, using collected primary data. Statistical hypotheses testing have been applied and presented in the thesis. The reference list is profound and well reflects current trends in the literature.

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.

The topic selected by Author has substantial element of scientific research with particular emphasis on data analysis and testing of alternative models. Author has acted independently and provided particular

justification for the research hypotheses and the methods selected.

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 of market orientation's impact on firm performance has particular importance from the practical perspective. 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 Irina Mamedgasanova meets the requirements for master thesis of MIB program thus the author of the thesis can be awarded the required degree.

Date September, 26th 2011



Scientific Advisor: *Associate Professor Maria M. Smirnova*