

REFEREE'S REVIEW

Program:	Master in International Business
Student:	Yulia Zhidkova
Title of thesis:	Socially responsible consumption in Russia: prospects and opportunities for penetration of the international experience

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	4	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	4	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	4	3	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	4	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	4	3	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	4	3	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	4	3	2

Each item above is evaluated on the following scale, as applicable: 5 = excellent, 4 = good, 3 = satisfactory, 2 = poor.

Additional comments:

The topic of the thesis is truly actual due to the (1) international growth of socially responsible consumption, and (2) beginning of the socially responsible consumption in Russia. The aim of the thesis however did not define correctly. The author presented only four research goals and four research questions (for theoretical and empirical parts). The research goals and research questions are not subordinated properly. The big part of the thesis related to the CSR theory and CSR strategy of MNCs is not covered by these goals and questions. The very topic of the thesis is out of alignment.

The logic of research is not clear enough. The analysis of CSR strategy based on the examples of four MNCs poorly connected with the consumer behaviour analysis. As a result the main structural parts are out of alignment.

The coverage of research goals is quite adequate. Nevertheless, some structural parts of the thesis (CSR theory and CSR strategy of MNCs) are not directly relevant to these goals. The main trends in CSR literature are not explained in the thesis. The choice of main literature sources is random, the most important articles/authors are not analysed. The modern literature about the Russian CSR experience (publications of Russian Managers Association, GSOM SPbU, etc.) is completely missed. The very terms of emerging markets and developing countries (Russia?) are used interchangeably without any explanation. The research tools and methods are selected properly. The data validity is quite adequate (the author explained correctly the samples).

The list of references is incomplete, especially in terms of CSR theory and Russian peculiarities of CSR.

The way of scientific thinking is independent. The conceptual research model however needs the additional arguments and explanations.

The theoretical background is partly related to the Russian practices. The results in general are just. The main Regulations for the master thesis are fulfilled.

Master thesis of Yulia Zhidkova meets the requirements of Master in International Business program, and deserves a "satisfactory" grade, thus the author can be given the desired degree.

Date 18.06.2011



Referee: Associate Professor Yury E. Blagov