

PhD Thesis Review

Title of the thesis: Consequences of Incorporating Sustainability Business Models into organizations of Small and medium-sized firms in Ghana.

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Reviewer: prof. Boris Popesko, Ph.D.

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General evaluation:

The evaluated PhD thesis follows the regulations for the PhD thesis includes all essential components of the original research work and fulfills all requested requirements. Author topic selection is based on the current literature sources and could be accepted as up-to-date. Ph.D. thesis is written according to the standards and the author presented logically structured research work, with logically developed research objectives, the appropriate methodology procedures with the use of adequate research techniques. The author's work presents also well-performed data processing, which resulted in adequate results and discussion.

According to the above-stated facts, the evaluated work meets all requirements for PhD thesis.

The topicality of the scope and theme of the thesis

The thesis deals with a very topical problem of sustainable entrepreneurship in the context of a developing economy, which is currently the object of intensive academic debate. The author provides an appropriate theoretical background of the problem and anchors her work in current literature sources. In chapter 2.1. the author very well argues the current importance of the researched problem and provides a theoretical overview of sustainable entrepreneurship. While in chapter 2.1.1. the author presents the evidence on problems related to lack of sustainable approach in the Ghanaian context, in chapter 2.1.2. the author presents the overview of studies published on sustainable entrepreneurship. However, it is not clear, how the author deals with the contextual issues of her work, and whether the work is related only to Ghana or generally to the emerging economies. This might be better clarified throughout the defense.

The author dedicated chapter 2.2.1. of the thesis to the description of the research gap. The presented discussion is adequate and the author provides some theoretical arguments for the necessity of the study by providing the links and discussing the relevant literature. On the other hand, I miss deeper discussions and stronger arguments about why the study is needed. It is not only about arguments for BMfS but also about the overall understanding of the nature of BMfS and sustainable performance, which I partly miss in this section. The thesis further appropriately develops the defined research gaps into the key research questions and research objectives.

In Chapter 3 author provides a sufficient theoretical framework for the study. All related theories are presented and discussed in this section and the author also explains how those theories are related to the study. The use of the appropriate theories is a strong part of the thesis and I can conclude, that the study's theoretical framework is well-anchored in the theoretical framework, which proves the good research skills of the author.

Methodology, data processing, and results of the thesis

The research methodology is a strong part of the thesis. Firstly, the author was able to very well connect the literature review and theoretical framework with the hypothesis development. The author presents the proper conceptual framework, which reflects the defined research gap. Secondly, the author was able to present a very strong explanation of the hypothesis development, which properly reflects the existing studies. Every developed hypothesis is properly discussed and the author explains its importance and how each hypothesis contributes to the existing knowledge.

The methodology of the data collection and processing is properly presented in Chapter 4. The author properly explains the research design, general framework of the study, study context, and used research instruments. The author also properly describes the data collection process and methods and how the questionnaires were distributed and collected. The author also properly explains the measurement instruments for the variables. All steps in the methods section and used variables are supported with links to relevant literature.

The processing of the collected data is presented in chapter 5. The author uses the appropriate statistical tools and explains the appropriateness of every used tool. I also appreciate the use of the advanced PLS-SEM method for hypothesis testing, which allows the estimation of complex cause-effect relationships. Results of the path analysis are then presented in Table 10 and the estimated research model is in Figure 6. The author was able to accept all hypotheses but with a weak effect size. The author further presents the summary of the hypotheses testing (table 18) and also provides a discussion of the defined RQs and Hypotheses. The author also provides the proper discussion of the individual RQs and Hypotheses in the context of related literature. In most cases, the findings are consistent with expectations and previous studies.

Theoretical and practical contribution of the thesis

The study has an appropriate theoretical contribution, mostly in bringing additional empirical evidence and strengthening the current theories on the contributions of BMfS to sustainability performance. Even if the study doesn't bring any original theory of findings it contributes to a better understanding of relations between analyzed variables and constructs. The contribution of the study could be seen also in the Ghanaian (emerging economy context), which is on the other hand not properly articulated in the discussion and findings. The thesis includes also other essential outcomes as the defined practical and political implications. The author also defined the limitations of the study, which is essential for any scientific work and provided suggestions for future work.

Formal features of the work

Evaluated Ph.D. thesis and its presentation meet all requirements for research work in the area of its formal structure and content. The thesis is written in a correct and appropriate language with the use of suitable English terms and words. References and information sources discussed by the author are sufficient and form the sufficient theoretical background for the authors' research outputs.

Publication activity of the student

Publication activity of the student meets the requirements. Student published one paper in SCOPUS indexed journal and one paper in SCOPUS indexed journal is accepted for publication. Both papers are related to the dissertation topic and both journals are published by EMERALD Publishing.

Final statement

The evaluated Ph.D. thesis represents good-quality research work, with the use of appropriate research techniques, methods, and concepts. The thesis covers an interesting and frequently discussed topic and proves the ability of the student to perform systematic research work. Despite the fact, that the study itself brings a relatively limited contribution to the theory and is more beneficial for the confirmation of existing theories, proves the author's research experience and capability for research work.

According to above mentioned facts I recommend this thesis for the defense.

Questions

1. Explain the context of the study. Is Ghana comparable with other emerging economies? Could be results of your study be generalized to all emerging economies?
2. What is the difference between entrepreneur's attitudes towards sustainable entrepreneurship between emerging and developed economies?
3. How you can explain and measure sustainable performance?



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