

REVIEW

from: prof. eng. Bozhidar Ivanov Hadjiev, DSc
University of food technology and III at BAS;

field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.8.
"Economics", scientific specialties: 05.02.18 "Economics and management"; 05.02.10 "World
economy and international economic relations" and in the competencies "Marketing" and
"Applied psychology",

Subject: dissertation work for awarding an educational and scientific degree
"Doctor" in the doctoral program "Economics and management (industry)"

Author of the dissertation: RUSTAM ASKANZADE

Dissertation topic: SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE SUPPLY CHAINS MANAGEMENT

Reason for submitting the review: Order of the Rector of the Academy of Economics
"D.A. Tsenov" - Svishtov № 574 /30.07.21, according to which a procedure for
public defense of the dissertation of Rustam Namik oglu Aslanzade was opened
and according to a decision of the Scientific jury.

1. Relevance of the problem developed in the dissertation in scientific and scientific-applied terms

According to order № 407 /30.06.2021 Rustam Aslanzade is enrolled in the Department of Industrial Business and Entrepreneurship at the Academy of Economics "D.A. Tsenov" - Svishtov in doctoral studies independent form of education in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.8. "Economics", doctoral program "Economics and management (industry)".

Apparently, the candidate was largely ready for defense in order to follow the orders of the Rector of Academy of Economics "D.A. Tsenov" - Svishtov № 573 and № 574 from 30.07.2021, respectively. Undoubtedly, the topic of the dissertation is extremely relevant and this has had its impact on the rapid development of the procedure. However, the topicality in the work is not sufficiently substantiated. I believe that the relevance of the topic can be specified through the following arguments, through the prism of the subject and object of research:

- In today's dynamic, electronic and open market world, the focus is on transformations of policies, strategies, systems, models and mechanisms related to the entrepreneurial and innovative potential of business for effective management of business processes, incl. of supply chains. Therefore, the theory associated with this focus is a modern theory of high practical significance. This theory provides knowledge on how to effectively manage changes affecting supply chains at every level in today's world of political, economic and social transformation.

- The modern complex processes of internationalization, globalization and digitalization, which are constantly changing society and nature, require the application of

modern innovative concepts in each industrial sector in order to achieve balanced benefits for both business and society and nature.

- The application of innovative concepts and standards for socially responsible management in the supply chain is directly related to the survival of human civilization. Numerous publications on the "business-society-nature" relationship, as well as on quality, price, energy and supply chain information management, are dedicated to these issues. However, the implementation of complex systems for effective change management in supply chain technologies remains a serious problem. This reflects first on the need to assess and analyze the possibilities for mass application of the **GS1 Standards System**, which provides a standardized approach to identifying trade and logistics units and locations, capturing supply chain traffic data and sharing this data within the enterprise and between the trading partners.

- At the same time, relatively few concepts and systems have been developed to increase the potential value of what enterprises can add to the global economy through socially responsible **supply chain management** and to achieve balanced benefits for business, society and nature. The topicality of the topic is gaining weight, given that companies operate in a highly competitive environment and in conditions of domination of transnational and multinational corporations, which largely own the "shelves" in supply chains.

2. Degree of knowledge of the state of the problem and the literary material.

I believe that from an educational point of view, the doctoral student has sufficiently, with few exceptions, become acquainted with some basic theoretical and methodological aspects concerning the topic. This can be seen to some extent from the title of his first publication in April 2019 on "Factors for the formation of the global supply chain" presented at the 17th International Scientific Conference "Information Technology and Management" ISMA, Riga, Latvia.

The content in the first chapter, as well as part of the used literature also give grounds that the doctoral student has to some extent dealt with the theory concerning the topic. It would make a good impression to point out the number of Bulgarian and foreign authors who deal comprehensively with issues related to trade, logistics, pricing, complex reengineering through the prism of social corporate responsibility and the supply chain.

The list of used literature includes a total of **130 sources**, of which in **Cyrillic - 16**, in **Latin - 114**. Although some of these sources do not directly address the topic, most are useful enough to conduct research on the topic of the dissertation. It can be concluded that the doctoral student is interested in publications related to the topic and despite the fact that a number of publications of important authors in the field of the researched problem have been neglected, he knows his condition to a large extent.

3. Correspondence of the chosen research methodology with the set goal and tasks of the dissertation

The research goal is clear, and according to it, the applicant must substantiate the **theoretical and practical foundations of the processes of dissemination of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the management of the supply chain**. Obviously, the goal is multifaceted and would make it difficult for even some proven scientists to work on these issues. It is commendable that the doctoral student has made some restrictions to avoid to some extent this multifaceted nature. In order to achieve the set goal with the restrictions made in the work, the candidate for doctor has indicated the following six tasks:

- to reveal the essence, features and forms of manifestation of the concept of corporate social responsibility;
- to determine the functional characteristics of the socially responsible management of the supply chain;
- to substantiate methodological approaches for assessing the level of social responsibility in the management of the supply chain;
- to study the current trends in the management of the socially responsible supply chain in the global business;
- to make a comparative analysis of the level of socially responsible supply chain management based on the author's methodology;
- to develop proposals for increasing the level of social responsibility in the management of the supply chain.

I believe that the first two tasks correspond to some extent to the content of the first chapter. The work would be improved if this chapter reveals the specific processes and their theoretical foundations for the dissemination of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in supply chain management. Thus, the tasks would correspond much better to the fulfillment of the goal. The implementation of the third task would be improved if both the known types of methodological approaches and their advantages and disadvantages were indicated. This would help the candidate to be motivated in choosing a methodological approach.

The fourth task, in my opinion, is not fulfilled, because the content of the dissertation lacks the necessary professional study of modern transformations of policies, strategies, systems and factors that affect the management of socially responsible supply chain in global business. The task itself can be the subject of a separate dissertation.

The fifth and sixth tasks to some extent correspond to the content of the second and third chapters.

The tasks set for the implementation of the goal, with small exceptions to one degree or another affect the content in all three chapters. This, on the one hand, reveals a complex thinking on the topic, but on the other hand, it prevents the differentiation of the problems and the more logical connection of the topics.

In accordance with the research topic, the object and the subject of research could be slightly specified, such as:

- The object of the study are the supply chains, incl. in companies producing and distributing HVAC equipment.
- The subject of the study is the provision of socially responsible management in supply chains.

It is fair to note that the main hypothesis mentioned in the dissertation is rather axiomatic. However, despite some discrepancies in the research methodology with the set goal, they do not reduce the significance of the doctoral thesis.

4. Characteristics and evaluation of the material.

The dissertation was developed under the scientific guidance of Prof. Dr. Aneta Deneva in the Department of Industrial Business and Entrepreneurship at Academy of Economics "D.A. Tsenov" - Svishtov. The research is focused on socially responsible management in supply chains, incl. in companies producing and distributing HVAC equipment. The presented dissertation contains **176 standard pages** /list of abbreviations, tables and figures, introduction, three chapters, conclusion, references, appendix /. In fact, it is a standard and widespread structure for a doctoral dissertation. An in-depth review of the work reveals that to a large extent the literature has been analyzed and interpreted in accordance with the research problem. Many of the issues in the dissertation related to socially responsible supply

chain management and the possibilities for performing the tasks related to the set goal are debatable. However, the efforts made by the doctoral student to reveal some guidelines for achieving the goal of the research make a good impression.

In my opinion, it is not so important that he did not look in depth at the processes, models and mechanisms for disseminating corporate social responsibility (CSR) in supply chain management, as well as tools for their implementation, as stated in the study. It is important that he makes a serious attempt by adapting some known methodologies to follow basic aspects for the implementation of the main tasks related to the goal. This is what reveals the good research potential of the candidate.

Regarding the dissertation, it is not enough that the candidate declares and assumes the responsibility that he has followed the rules of scientific ethics. In my opinion, especially in the first chapter, the candidate must show that he is well educated on the subject and is familiar with the publications of prominent scientists. Correct citation is extremely important. Otherwise, the authorship of texts, tables, figures and formulas is incorrectly demonstrated. It is important to indicate and systematize known theories, theoretical and practical aspects and to indicate which of them will be useful for the study. Even if an adaptation is made from some sources, it must indicate what it means. Therefore, I believe that the assessment of content that does not correctly indicate the sources on which it is based could not be good. By correctly indicating the source / author, publication, page / on which a content, statement, table, figure, formula is based, incorrect self-assessments and statements will be avoided at first, and to a lesser extent the suspicions of plagiarism. The chapter concludes with conclusions that are known in the field, but are inherently axiomatic, because the content does not provide grounds for their justification.

It is not clear where and how the works of G. Bowen, K. Davis, A. Carroll and other prominent classics were used, which laid the foundations of the concepts related to the theory of social responsibility and which are mentioned in the introduction. It is not clear where and which of the works of R. Ackerman, W. Buffett, Y. Blagov, L. Laptev, M. Christopher, D. Ivanov and others. are used and adapted in assessing the level of social responsibility in the management of supply chains, as well as in the formation of the concept of socially responsible management / cf. chapter 3 and topic 3.1 of the dissertation /. It would be good to study, analyze, evaluate and develop technologies to solve management problems throughout the supply chain. However, these problems could not be unified, as the ideas, strategies, transactions with their 10 stages, resources, implementation channels, shelves and preferences of the participants regarding the quality of supply are extremely diverse and are not subject to unification. Thus, the author's attempt to propose a certain methodology for partial assessment of social responsibility in supply chain management, as well as the latter to offer some guidelines for improving and implementing social responsibility in chain management, can be accepted with sufficient accuracy. of supplies in the specific activity considered by him.

Conclusion: The focus of its content could be on a clear assessment and analysis of the possibilities and benefits of implementing socially responsible management in the supply chain.

I believe that after the doctoral student was expelled with the right to defense, the procedure for public defense was hastily opened. He could be given the opportunity, within at least a few months, to rectify some inaccuracies concerning the subject and to refine his work.

Given the above and given that the dissertation was developed, discussed and proposed for defense to participants in one of the elite departments, such as "Industrial Business and Entrepreneurship" at Academy of Economics "D.A. Tsenov" - Svishtov, he can generally be assessed positively by correctly quoting the sources, removing to the defense some inaccuracies and axiomatic statements.

5. Contributions to the dissertation.

The research efforts of the candidate can be outlined in areas that reflect and justify the following scientific and applied contributions:

- The paper reveals the complex nature of some factors and problems related to the implementation of socially responsible management in the supply chain
- A study for SMEs is proposed and on this basis are systematized and enriched knowledge related to the implementation of socially responsible management in the supply chain;

6. Evaluation of the publications on the dissertation.

The candidate indicates that he / she participates with:

- two articles in international periodicals (Web of Science), where he is the third and second author, respectively:

1. Kalenyuk I., Tsimbal L., Aslanzade R. Greening the Supply Chain in Corporate Responsibility. *Management Theory and Studies for Rural Business and Infrastructure Development*. ISSN 2345-0355. 2019. Vol. 41. No. 4: 501-510.
2. Tsimbal L., Aslanzade R. Supply chain management from a social responsibility perspective // *Bulletin of national academy of sciences of the republic of Kazakhstan*. Volume 3, Number 385 (2020). – p.160-168. ISSN 2518-1467 (Online).

- five articles in non-indexed international periodicals without impact factor in 4 of which he is an independent and in one he is a second author.

1. Aslanzade R. Supply management in the system of corporate social responsibility (CSR). *Economics and Education*, 2018, Vol.3, N.1, p.42 – 46. URL:
2. Aslanzade R. Socially Responsible Supply Chain Management in the Modern Business. – AMEA-nın Xəbərləri. İqtisadiyyat seriyası 2019 (may-iyun) *Transactions of the National Academy of Sciences of economical series, 2019 (may-june). Economic theory. General economy.* – Baku. - 2019, № 3. – P. 32 – 39.
3. Djakon D., Aslanzade R. Socially responsible supply chains in world construction companies // *International Economic Policy*. Kyiv, KNEU. ISSN: 1811-9832. 2020. – Vol.1-2 (32-33). – P.81-99.
4. Aslanzade R. Formation of socially responsible supply chain management based on a balanced scorecard. *Economics and Education*, 2020, Vol.5, N.1, p.29 – 35.
5. Aslanzade R. Methodological approaches to assessing the social responsibility level in the field of supply chain management // *ACCESS*, Vol.2, Issue 2, Pages: 162-174.

- six conference papers in 5 of which he is an independent, and in one he is a second author after his supervisor.

1. Aslanzade R. Global supply chain formation factors. *Proceeding of the 17th International scientific conference Information technologies and management 2019*. April 25-26, ISMA, Riga, Latvia. - P.95. ISSN 1691-2489.
2. Aslanzade R. The conceptual provisions for developing of socially responsible supply chain management in companies. *Proceeding of the 18th International scientific conference Information technologies and management 2020*. April 23-24, ISMA, Riga, Latvia. - P.231-232.
3. Aslanzade R. Principles and Standards for Social Responsibility in Supply Chains. *Proceeding of the 19th International scientific conference Information technologies and management 2021*. April 21-23, ISMA, Riga, Latvia. pp.215-216. ISSN 1691-2489
4. Aslanzade R. Sustainability in the supply chains management. Економіка, фінанси та управління: аспекти інноваційного розвитку. Матеріали науково-практичної конференції (м. Миколаїв, 26-27 лютого 2021 р.). – Херсон: Видавництво «Молодий вчений», 2021, С.95-98. ISBN 978-966-992-411-7;
5. Aslanzade R. The socially responsible supply chains management in the construction.

Перспективи розвитку нової економіки на світовому, державному та регіональному рівнях. Матеріали II науково-практичної конференції (м. Полтава, 25-26 вересня 2020 р.). – Херсон: Видавництво «Молодий вчений», 2020, с.90-93. ISBN 978-966-992-229-8;

6. Deneva, A., Aslanzade, R. (2021). Features of formation of the mechanism of management of socially responsible companies in the supply chain. *International scientific conference "Sustainable development and social and economic cohesion in the 21st century: trends and challenges"*, dedicated on the 85th Anniversary of the establishment of the D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics. (inprint).

The above-mentioned publishing activity is enviable for a young scientist. Of the many reviews I have made for the acquisition of ESD "Doctor" so far I have not encountered such publishing activity in one or two years. It reveals the future research potential, the degree of independence and the candidate's ability to work in a team.

I cannot comment on the content of these publications and to what extent it is duplicated because they were not provided to me. Nevertheless, I would like to make some remarks here as well. As can be seen from the titles, not all publications are directly related to the topic. Also disturbing is the participation of a young researcher with 10 publications in 2020 and in 2021, when the defense is provided.

7. Educational and teaching activity of the doctoral student

There is no information available in the documentation about the level of the educational and teaching activity of the candidate. It is assumed that this activity is positively evaluated by the department to which the doctoral student is enrolled and by the Faculty Council.

8. Evaluation of the abstract

The content of the abstract should give a basic idea of the scientific value of the dissertation. Perhaps it is an overdose of the evaluative nature of labour. The notes on the abstract are similar to those for the doctoral thesis. Some other remarks could be made concerning its technical layout and some inaccuracies in the citations.

Table 1 is indicated on pages 19 and 20 in the abstract. The same table is indicated as Table 2.6. on pages 88-89 in the dissertation. It makes a good impression when the numbering is the same. But, in essence, it is not clear from the above how to determine the degree of implementation of the various forms of manifestation listed in the table?

On page 31 in the author's abstract is indicated fig. 1. The same figure is referred to as FIG. 3.1. on page 120 in the dissertation. It is not clear what kind of social responsibility mechanism is in question? Also, the indicated three stages / selection of materials, suppliers, control / with the main activities indicated in them in the figure could not exhaust the activities that ensure quality implementation of even the best mechanism.

9. Opinions, recommendations and notes

The candidate for ESD "Doctor" operates on extremely complex issues with a multifaceted nature, affecting corporate social responsibility and supply chain management. I believe that working on the topic would make it difficult for any scientist and of course for every young scientist this leads to inaccuracies and omissions. The study of socially responsible management in supply chains, which in today's world are broadband and multi-band and saturated with many innovations and entrepreneurial efforts can be difficult for even the most prominent scientists in this field.

Especially considering that today the world is in a state of serious attempts at transformation in conditions of economic, spiritual and health crises. In this regard, in order to

improve the work, especially the future work of the doctoral student, I have the following recommendations and critical remarks:

- The structure of the dissertation could follow more precisely the implementation of the tasks related to achieving the goal and proving the thesis. Also, the research methodology must be clear and specific. I recommend more in-depth theoretical knowledge related to both CSR and supply chain technologies, which includes a variety of marketing and commercial policies, processes, systems, models, mechanisms and tools.

- I think it is useful for the candidate to get acquainted with the theory of complex reengineering / CoR / and the systems of GS1 standards. Because part of the great interest in the theoretical and methodological basis for using the concepts of the CoR is due to the fact that the focus is on the application of an integrated system for effective change management at each level, incl. of CSR and supply chains with the aim of providing balanced benefits for both business and nature and society;

- It is good to note that the applicant has focused on the application of the ISO 14000 standard, related to one of its elements concerning the possibilities for improving the environmental management and the life cycle of the production. However, after talking about an integrated approach on the topic and in the digitalization stage, ways could be sought to combine the elements of ISO 14000 with other quality management standards and especially with the elements of GS1 / GS1 Barcode-most -recognizable by the standards, which is defined by the BBC as "one of the 50 things that built the world economy"; GS1tags; GS1 magnetic cards; GS1biometric data; GS1 voice recognition; GS1 applications; GS1 benefits for the consumer in terms of speed, accuracy in sales and the ability to check the quality and whether the manufacturer and the product are regular, not fakes; GS1 benefits for the trader; GS1 benefits for the manufacturer related to information on how many goods are currently in stock, on the road or for sale.

- In the future, the conclusions of the relevant chapter should correspond to the content in it, avoiding axiomatic statements in the work. In the same way, technical inaccuracies must not be allowed in indicating the sources used and the rules of scientific ethics must be precisely observed and the author must more convincingly express his own position.

- Future research would benefit if research efforts on the topic focus on quality management at each level affecting CSR and supply chains, including: in the formation and development of entrepreneurial and innovation structures, in inputs, in transformational processes, in the development and use of artificial intelligence, industry 4.0, the circular economy, intelligent packaging, modern standards, such as GS1, in outbound processes, trade, etc.

During the defense, I recommend that the candidate for ONS "Doctor" answer in addition to the above questions / especially in section 8 / and the questions:

- By what criteria was the object of study selected?
- What are the main prerequisites and factors revealing the possibilities for implementing socially responsible supply chain management?
- What are the main problems and barriers to implementing effective socially responsible supply chain management?
- How are the opportunities for application of effective socially responsible management of the supply chain in the surveyed enterprise on a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is the lowest?
- In modern conditions, which concepts and standards are most necessary for enterprises for effective quality management in supply chains?
- What is the GS1 System of Standards and how does it affect socially responsible supply chain management? Which organization represents the system in Bulgaria?

- After the enterprises differ in their entrepreneurial, innovative and financial potential, can a unified methodology and technology be developed for effective socially responsible supply chain management?

10. Conclusion.

The doctoral dissertation is devoted to an important problem for economic and managerial theory and practice and has some scientific contributions. Regardless of the critical remarks and recommendations made, the research potential of the candidate is outlined, which gives me grounds to recommend to the esteemed Scientific jury, in accordance with the requirements of ZRASRB, PPZRASRB and the Rules of Academy of Economics "D.A. Tsenov" - Svishtov in removing in the dissertation of above inaccuracies and successful defense of the dissertation with correct answers to the questions, to award **Rustam Aslanzade** the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the doctoral program "Economics and Management (Industry)" in the field of science 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.8. "Economy".

Date: 14.08.21

Reviewer:
prof. B. Hadzhiev, DSc