

Thesis Reviewer's Report

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 Title: Role of Innovation and Impact on Economic Development in MENA Countries
 Supervisor: prof. Ing. Jan Stejskal, Ph.D.
 Reviewer: Assoc. Prof. Viktor Prokop, Ph.D.
 Reviewer's job title: Vice-Dean for External Affairs

Assessment criteria

	excellent	very good	acceptable	unacceptable	N/A
Achievement of the aims of the thesis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use of appropriate methods	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Depth of analysis (in relation to the topic)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Structure and extent of the thesis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use of Czech and foreign sources (including references)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Formal aspects (text, diagrams, charts)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality of language (style, grammar, terminology)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Usability of the results

	high	medium	low	N/A
In theory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In practice	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other comments

The author aims to „access how innovations contributes to economic development in specific MENA region. The analysis will also include the analyses of determinants in innovation environment in selected countries. The result will cover the results of impact assessment and possible recommendations to improve the situation.“

In the first part, the author describes region/regional development and other related “concepts”. I criticize the author that right from the first chapter and the first paragraph he uses relatively long passages of text that are more difficult to read (also, for example, in the part 1.1.1). In addition, although this is a theoretical part of the work, in some places this text is more reminiscent of a "literature review", see reference to Kuhter's (2012) research on Nigeria. Also, for example, the author is supposed to define a region, but he already describes factors influencing regional identities in some parts. Some passages of the text do not fit completely into the subsections that the author describes, see for example part 1.1 "Development", where the author writes about the environmental sustainability. The same is true, for example, in the part “Regional development”, where the author mixes everything together - entrepreneurship, innovation, policymakers and their role, drivers of regional development and so on - the text is not clear, and the reader cannot understand what exactly the author wants to express in the given subsections. There is no doubt that the author put effort into writing the text and worked with a wide range of literature, however, I would appreciate if the text was better structured, the author should refer more to the basic theoretical concepts associated with regional growth/development. The text should be also better presented, for example in an overview of important determinants/policies/goals in a table.

The second chapter is again completely confusing and provides the reader with "a mix of everything related at least marginally to the word innovation". It's strange that the chapter starts on page 30, but subsection 2.1 doesn't start until page 38. What was the author trying to say in the first 8 "introductory" pages of this chapter? In this part, the author writes (without theoretical anchoring) about the triple-helix model, then compares the states according to the "Index for Innovation" and presents information about "The Distribution of Companies and R&D by Country/Region". Part 2.2 is called innovation Ecosystem, but it should rather be "Innovation Environment", as it is stated in the aim of the thesis. Why, in this part, author writes about "eco-innovation" + this part deserves much more elaboration as it is a key part of the thesis. The same for the part 2.3 + why the author did not present overview of so far confirmed "determinants in innovation environment" as he want to analyse such determinants in the analytical part?

In part 3, the author describes different ecosystems, however, I don't really understand what exactly the author wants to say. Does the author only want to describe ecosystems or is he looking for key characteristics according to a pre-set key or is he only collecting available information about selected territories and naming innovation ecosystems? From my point of view, the author should clearly define what an innovation ecosystem is, what elements it contains and what is key to research in it. It would be ideal to capture all this in a picture. Subsequently, he could examine in the given areas whether the selected ecosystems contain all the selected elements. This would add value. And again, at the end of the chapter, quite unexpectedly, there is the subsection "regional cooperation", where the author even presents a paragraph that is longer than one page.

Part 4 – the author states that "The objective of this thesis is to scrutinize the impact of innovation on economic development in countries within MENA by studying their innovation milieu and providing suggestions based on outcome evaluation". First, this objective is not consistent with the one above. Second, where "*analyses of determinants in innovation environment in selected countries*" are? How research question on the page 58 correlate with the aim of the thesis? The entire chapter 4 is very confusing, the author has completely stopped using the division and numbering of subsections, presents 1-2 line paragraphs and the reader gets lost in the text. Of course, there is a complete absence, for example, of a reference to relevant literature that would support the steps and methods chosen by the author. Again, almost after five pages of the text is the first sub-chapter 4.1.

I have a problem with the table 4 – author presents "Independent variables" categorized as "Innovation", but, this part includes, among others, internet penetration, employment, political stability – the author should describe how exactly these variables represent innovation. Author should also describe what "notable results" means? It is common for significant results to be marked in the tables with the number of stars dedicating the level of significance. It also seems to me that, considering the length of the work, the results are relatively short.

Summary of results – Part 5.2 (page 72) – author states that "Importing inappropriate innovation can lead to counterproductive consequences" - how did the author come to this statement? What specific variable from his analysis expresses this? The same for "There is a profoundly positive and statistically significant correlation between innovation and human development index".

From my point of view, the author has done a lot of work, but the text is not well structured and, as is clear above, contains a lot of ambiguities. There is also an enormous amount of especially formal shortcomings in the text.

Questions and suggestions for the defence

The passage above contains several questions to which the author should respond.

Overall evaluation

I **recommend** the thesis for defence.
The proposed grade for the thesis: E

In Pardubice on 13.8.2024

Signature