

REVIEW

of the opponent of Orlovska Yulia

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for the qualification work of **Ye Jianfu** on the topic:

"Management of China's Post Pandemic Sustainable Business Model",

submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the specialty

073 – Management

Relevance of the topic of the qualification work. In the post-pandemic era, the global economic pattern has undergone profound adjustments, with market demand shrinking, supply chains restructuring, and consumption concepts transforming—posing unprecedented challenges to the survival and development of enterprises. Sustainable business models, which balance economic growth with social value and environmental responsibility, have become a core path for enterprises to break through difficulties and build long-term competitiveness. Benchmarking management, as a scientific tool for optimizing practices and improving efficiency, provides systematic methodological support for the innovative design and implementation of sustainable business models.

Against this backdrop, Ye Jianfu's dissertation "Management of China's Post-Pandemic Sustainable Business Model" focuses on a highly relevant and urgent research direction. The study aims to deepen the theoretical framework of post-pandemic sustainable business model management and develop practical recommendations for enhancing the sustainability and international competitiveness of Chinese enterprises by integrating advanced international concepts and localized practices.

This dissertation is closely linked to multiple important scientific research projects, including the basic scientific research project "European Inclusive Circular Economy: Post-War & Post-Pandemic Module for Ukraine" (registration number 101085640 — EICEPPMU — ERASMUS-JMO-2022-HEI-TCH-RSCH) and the

international cooperation project "Enterprise Sustainable Business Model Transformation in Global Value Chain Restructuring" (registration number 2023-INT-089). Its research results not only respond to the practical needs of China's post-pandemic economic recovery but also contribute to the global consensus on inclusive growth and green development, making it a valuable exploration in the field of management.

The degree of validity and reliability of scientific provisions, conclusions and recommendations

The scientific provisions, conclusions, and recommendations presented in the dissertation are firmly grounded in the theoretical foundations of sustainable development, circular economy, stakeholder theory, and benchmarking management. The core research objective is to construct a theoretical framework for the management of China's post-pandemic sustainable business models and propose optimization strategies and implementation paths with practical value through empirical analysis.

The dissertation adopts a comprehensive and multi-method research approach, integrating theoretical analysis, quantitative research, qualitative research, comparative research, and case studies: Theoretical analysis – Systematically sorts out the evolutionary trajectory and internal connections of sustainable business model and benchmarking management theories, establishing a clear conceptual model and analytical framework (P.10); Quantitative research – Collects secondary data from listed companies' financial reports, policy texts, and industry statistics, applying multivariate statistical analysis, structural equation modeling, and time series analysis to test theoretical hypotheses (P.10); Qualitative research – Conducts in-depth case studies (e.g., the China-Laos Railway project), field observations, and interviews to analyze the innovation mechanisms and success factors of benchmark enterprises' sustainable business models (P.87-103); Comparative research – Compares sustainable business models across China and developed countries, different regions (eastern, central, western China), and industries (high-tech, traditional manufacturing), extracting representative benchmark experiences (P.10); Specialized methods – Uses the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP) combined with principal component analysis to construct a multi-dimensional evaluation index system, ensuring objectivity in

assessing the development level of sustainable business models; applies SWOT analysis to evaluate internal strengths/weaknesses and external opportunities/challenges, providing a basis for differentiated strategies (P.10).

This multi-method integration ensures the validity and reliability of the research results. The conclusions drawn from the study are not only consistent with existing theoretical consensus but also supported by sufficient empirical data, and the proposed recommendations are highly targeted and operable.

Content and structure of the dissertation

The dissertation is well-organized and logically structured. It consists of an introduction, three main chapters, a conclusion, references, and appendices. Chapter 1 lays the theoretical and methodological foundations of sustainable business model management. Chapter 2 presents the evaluation system and conducts an empirical analysis of China's regional and sectorial performance. Chapter 3 focuses on the Belt and Road Initiative, identifying implementation challenges and proposing a new benchmarking model. The structure facilitates a smooth transition from theory to practice, and from domestic to international applications.

The author introduces a three-dimensional spatial model to visualize the evolution of sustainable business models, using economic, environmental, and social indicators as axes. This model effectively captures the dynamic nature of sustainability transitions and allows for comparative analysis across regions and industries. The trajectory analysis reveals that while eastern coastal provinces in China lead in sustainable development, central and western regions are catching up through targeted policy interventions and green investments (P. 108–121).

The dissertation also provides a detailed case study of the China-Laos Railway, illustrating how sustainable business models can be operationalized in cross-border infrastructure projects. The case demonstrates significant improvements across all five evaluation dimensions, with the composite score rising from 0.41 in 2021 to 0.89 in 2024, reflecting a successful transition from exploratory to mature sustainability practices (P. 87–103).

Scientific novelty of the results of the dissertation work

The dissertation contains several important scientific innovations that enrich the theory and practice of sustainable business model management:

First obtained :

- Construction of a post-pandemic sustainable business model evaluation model based on the "economic-social-environmental" three dimensions, combined with benchmark management methods to design an evaluation system containing 28 indicators, enabling quantitative comparison of development levels across different industries and regions;
- Development of a "benchmark-adaptation-innovation" three-stage evolution model for sustainable business models, revealing the dynamic evolutionary patterns from benchmarking imitation to independent innovation in the post-pandemic period; in the international cooperation dimension, creation of localization methods for sustainable models based on cultural sensitivity, addressing the adaptation challenges faced by Chinese enterprises in "Belt and Road" investments; design of a gradient advancement policy support system to address unbalanced development issues among eastern, central, and western regions, promoting regional coordination and balanced development;

Improved:

- Enhanced benchmark management application methods in cross-cultural contexts, establishing an adaptability assessment matrix for sustainable business models in "Belt and Road" investments;
- Development of real-time monitoring and early warning systems for sustainable business models using big data analysis technology, achieving precision and intelligence in management decision-making;

Further developed

- Stakeholder collaboration theory, constructing a stability analysis framework for sustainable business models based on value co-creation;
- Integration of digital transformation with sustainable development strategies, proposing a trinity model of "digital empowerment-green development-inclusive growth" providing differentiated paths for Chinese enterprises participating in international competition in the post-pandemic period.

Theoretical and practical significance of the results obtained

Theoretical significance: Enriches the theory of business model innovation: The dissertation constructs a theoretical framework for post-pandemic sustainable business model management with Chinese characteristics, filling the gap in systematic research on sustainable business models in the post-pandemic context and expanding the application scope of benchmarking management theory in cross-cultural and cross-regional scenarios (P.12-13); Improves the evaluation system of sustainable business models: The proposed multi-dimensional, dynamic evaluation model (integrating economic, environmental, social, innovation, and "Belt and Road" dimensions) overcomes the limitations of traditional static evaluation and single-dimensional indicators, providing a more scientific analytical tool for academic research (P.36-40); Promotes the integration of multiple disciplines: Combines management, economics, ecology, and sociology, realizing the cross-integration of theories such as circular economy, stakeholder collaboration, and digital transformation, and providing a new research perspective for interdisciplinary studies on sustainable development (P.14-22).

Practical significance: Provides guidance for enterprise transformation: Offers enterprises comprehensive guidance from benchmarking to model innovation, including evaluation diagnosis, path optimization, and performance assessment tools, helping enterprises enhance their sustainable development capabilities and risk resistance (P.12); Supports government policy formulation: Provides empirical support for government departments to develop differentiated policies, clarifying the development priorities and support directions of different industries and regions (e.g., focusing on international cooperation support for eastern regions and increasing fiscal transfer payments for western regions) (P.66-67); Facilitates "Belt and Road" project implementation: Delivers model adaptation guidelines for enterprises investing in "Belt and Road" projects, reducing cross-cultural operational risks and improving the efficiency of international business (e.g., the China-Laos Railway case provides a replicable paradigm for transnational infrastructure projects) (P.87-103); Promotes the formation of a sustainable industrial ecosystem: Provides reference solutions for industry associations and intermediary organizations to build exchange platforms,

promoting the sharing of best practices and accelerating the construction of a sustainable industrial ecosystem (P.12).

Completeness of reflection of the main provisions of the dissertation in the works published by the author

The core research results of the dissertation have been fully reflected in 8 scientific publications, including: 5 papers published in Ukrainian scientific journals indexed in international scientometric databases; 3 papers included in the proceedings of international academic conferences.

A dissertation is an independently performed scientific research. All scientific results presented in the dissertation were obtained by the author independently. Of the scientific works published in co-authorship, only those ideas and provisions that are the result of the applicant's independent research were used.

Assessment of dissertation structure, language and style of presentation

The dissertation follows a standardized and logical structure, including an introduction, three chapters (each with clear subsections and conclusions), a conclusion, a list of references (169 entries), and appendices (2 parts) (P.13, P.139, P.156). The structure is rigorous, with each part closely linked to the core research theme, forming a complete logical chain from theory to practice, from analysis to application.

The dissertation is written in formal academic English, with a rigorous and concise scientific style. The use of special terminology (e.g., "sustainable business model", "benchmarking management", "and circular economy") is accurate and consistent, and the presentation of research data (tables, figures) is clear and standardized (P.18-20, P.25, P.48). The text avoids ambiguous expressions, ensuring the objectivity and readability of the research content. Whether it is theoretical elaboration, data analysis, or case description, the language is concise and to the point, reflecting the author's solid academic literacy and rigorous research attitude.

Absence (presence) of violation of academic integrity

The text of the dissertation has been strictly checked for academic integrity. The author has clearly marked all citations of other authors' ideas, results, and texts, with complete references to the original sources. The independent research results of the author are clearly distinguished from co-authored works, and there is no plagiarism, fabrication of data, or other violations of academic integrity.

According to the requirements of academic norms, the dissertation has also undergone similarity testing (e.g., using Turnitin Similarity), and the results show no unauthorized textual borrowing. The entire research process adheres to the principles of objectivity, authenticity, and integrity, fully complying with the academic ethics requirements for doctoral dissertations.

Remarks on the work and its debatable provisions

While the dissertation achieves significant innovations and practical value, there are several issues that require further clarification and discussion, which are of a constructive nature and do not affect the overall positive evaluation of the work:

1. Selection and validity of evaluation indicators: when constructing the multi-dimensional evaluation system of sustainable business models, how to further ensure the representativeness and independence of the 42 indicators. For example, in the "Belt and Road" special dimension, indicators such as "cross-border supply chain disruption early warning accuracy" are difficult to quantify. What specific measurement methods and data sources are used to ensure their objectivity. (Relevant content: P. 52-87, P. 108-121)
2. Processing of indicator correlation and weight allocation: The dissertation uses the AHP-entropy method for weight allocation. When there is multicollinearity between indicators (e.g., "clean energy usage proportion" and "carbon reduction target completion rate" in the environmental dimension), what specific measures are taken to avoid overlapping information affecting the evaluation results. How to verify the rationality of the weight allocation results. (Relevant content: P. 78-87, P. 130-156)
3. Consideration of non-economic factors in regional differences: The study points out significant regional differences in China's post-pandemic

sustainable business models (eastern regions are more advanced than central and western regions). In addition to economic foundation, resource endowment, and technological level, do factors such as local policy implementation intensity, cultural traditions, and corporate social responsibility awareness affect the development of sustainable business models and how to quantify the impact of these non-economic factors. (Relevant content: P. 42-52, P. 134-156)

4. Representativeness of case selection: The China-Laos Railway is selected as a typical case of "Belt and Road" sustainable business models. What are the specific criteria for selecting this case and the differences in the application of the proposed "three-dimensional collaborative model" between infrastructure projects and other types of projects (e.g., manufacturing, service industry). How to better promote the replication and promotion of case experience across industries. (Relevant content: P. 87-103, P. 121-130)
5. Practical challenges of policy recommendations: The dissertation proposes a series of policy recommendations, such as "strengthening top-down design at the national level" and "developing demonstration model enterprises". In practice, what conflicts may exist between these recommendations and local interests, enterprise short-term benefits, or international market rules and what about supporting measures are needed to ensure their effective implementation. (Relevant content: P. 134-156, P. 167-175)

General conclusion and assessment of the qualification work

Ye Jianfu's dissertation "Management of China's Post-Pandemic Sustainable Business Model" is an independent, high-quality qualification scientific work that focuses on a topical academic and practical issue. The dissertation fully meets the requirements of the specialty 073 - Management (Field of study - Management and administration), with rigorous theoretical construction, sufficient empirical evidence, and innovative research results.

In terms of theoretical contributions, the dissertation constructs a dynamic management framework for post-pandemic sustainable business models, improves the multi-dimensional evaluation system, and expands the application of benchmarking

management in cross-cultural contexts. In terms of practical value, it provides operable tools and strategies for Chinese enterprises' post-pandemic transformation and "Belt and Road" investment management, and offers a scientific basis for government policy formulation.

The dissertation adheres to academic norms, has a reasonable structure, accurate language, and no violations of academic integrity. The remarks proposed are constructive and will help further improve the depth and scope of the research.

In conclusion, the dissertation "Management of China's Post-Pandemic Sustainable Business Model" meets the requirements for awarding the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the field of knowledge 07 - Management and Administration, and its author Ye Jianfu deserves to be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the specialty 073 - Management.

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