



Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Natalia Viryasova

Title: Assessing the Effectiveness of the United Nations Security Council: case of operations in the African countries

Programme/year: Master in International Relations

Author of Evaluation (supervisor): Jan Karlas

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	9
	Theoretical/conceptual framework	30	25
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	25
<i>Total</i>		80	59
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	8
	Style	5	5
	Formal requirements	5	5
<i>Total</i>		20	18
TOTAL		100	77



Evaluation

Major criteria:

This M.A. thesis deals with an interesting and important topic: the effectiveness of UN peace operations in Africa. There are several strong aspects of the thesis. The first one is the theoretical basis of the thesis. The analysis is grounded in the standard set of factors that are usually used to explain the success of UN peace operations. The author obviously included factors that characterize the nature of the conflict, such as the willingness of the parties to cooperate, or the ethnic component. Among the explanatory factors, she also includes some features of the missions, e.g. duration of deployment or enforcement capabilities.

Second, the thesis provides a relatively extensive review of the previous research.

Third, the empirical analysis is marked by a relatively sufficient depth and richness. In each case, the author subsequently and systematically explores all the explanatory factors. For instance, to measure the human resources of the missions the author assembled and assessed the information from UN documents. The same holds for financial resources. The clarity of the mandates is analyzed with the authorizing resolutions.

The analysis is marked by one rather substantial shortcoming. The standard and the most relevant way would be to assess in the first step the effectiveness of the mission. Indeed, the author defines on p. 34 the effectiveness of the missions. Subsequently, she should first assess the effectiveness of the missions with this definition. In this way, she would characterize each mission as more or less effective. In the next step, she should consider which of the factors could influence the effectiveness of the mission.

On the contrary, the author does not start with the evaluation of the mission's effectiveness. She starts directly from explanatory factors and assesses whether each of them made the mission effective. However, this is difficult to do if we do not know the effectiveness of the mission first.

Moreover, the author's judgment on the contribution of factors is usually rather short and subjective. What is missed here is a more specific method for judging the factors.



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I would encourage the author to explain during the defense: 1) why she did not provide the overall assessment of the effectiveness as a starting point in each case study, 2) which approach she used to decide whether the respective factor influenced the mission.

Last but not least, the author could also work more with the literature on the individual conflicts.

Minor criteria:

No comments

Overall evaluation:

The thesis is relatively well written. What needs to be appreciated is a theoretical background and the quality of the empirical work. Two major shortcomings are a deviation from the standard work, more specifically, the absence of the evaluation of the mission's effectiveness as a starting point of the analysis, and a rather subjective and short assessment of the relevancy of the explanatory factors in the case studies.

Suggested grade:

C

Signature: