

REFEREE'S REVIEW

Program:	Master in International Business
Student:	Sergey Yakovlev
Title of thesis:	Logistics outsourcing and firm performance in internationalized and non-internationalized companies in Russia.

Justification of the topic choice. Accuracy in defining the aim and objectives of the thesis. Justification of the topic choice; accuracy in defining the aim and tasks of the thesis; originality of the topic and the extent to which it was covered; alignment of the thesis' topic, aim and objectives.	5	4	3	2
Structure and logic of the text flow. Logic of research; full scope of the thesis; alignment of thesis' structural parts, i.e. theoretical and empirical parts.	5	4	3	2
Quality of analytical approach and quality of offered solution to the research objectives. Adequacy of objectives coverage; ability to formulate and convey the research problem; ability to offer options for its solution; application of the latest trends in relevant research are for the set objectives.	5	4	3	2
Quality of data gathering and description. Quality of selecting research tools and methods; data validity adequacy; adequacy of used data for chosen research tools and methods; completeness and relevance of the list of references.	5	4	3	2
Scientific aspect of the thesis. Independent scientific thinking in solving the set problem/objectives; the extent to which the student contributed to selecting and justifying the research model (conceptual and/or quantitative), developing methodology/approach to set objectives.	5	4	3	2
Practical/applied nature of research. Extent to which the theoretical background is related to the international or Russian managerial practice; development of applied recommendations; justification and interpretation of the empirical/applied results.	5	4	3	2
Quality of thesis layout. Layout fulfils the requirements of the Regulations for master thesis preparation and defense, correct layout of tables, figures, references.	5	4	3	2

Each item above is evaluated on the following scale, as applicable: 5 = excellent, 4 = good, 3 = satisfactory, 2 = poor.

Additional comments:

The study of Sergey Yakovlev aims to investigate issues concerning outsourcing logistics operations and its impact on how firms perform along the supply chain. The topic of the research is up-to-date when outsourcing is spread intensively as many firms use third parties and delegate some operations activities to improve their supply chain.

The thesis consists of two chapters – theoretical and empirical parts of the thesis which seems to be quite logical.

In the first chapter the author made literature analysis in order to find research gap but used not very wide range of information resources presented in only 59 items of used sources. Moreover there are not many recent articles or books (just papers published 2010 - 2012 in the list)

The research is based mainly on the data provided by the study of research project of Deutsche Bahn and Russian Railways Centre of International Logistics and Supply Chain Management – “Contractual logistics and outsourcing in Russia” which is adequate for the aim of the thesis.

The text of the thesis is not very well structured and it is not very evident how theory is connected to the empirical part. The theoretical part seems to be quite general.

The layout of Sergey Yakovlev's master thesis fulfils the requirements of the Regulations for master thesis preparation and defense. However, the layout of tables and figures in the second chapter is not correct – namely, there are no titles. The diagrams have no scales which decrease its clearness.

List of references is not very long as was mentioned before and different references have different styles.

The master thesis can be considered as finished scientific work which includes both theoretical investigation and quite well designed empirical study.

Master thesis of Sergey Yakovlev meets the requirements of Master in International Business program, and deserves a “good” grade, thus the author can be given the desired degree.

Date: September 24, 2012

Referee: Assistant Professor, Operations Management Department

Margarita A. Gladkova

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Gladkova', written in a cursive style.