

REFEREE'S REVIEW

Program:	MIB
Student:	Zhalia Mamedova
Title of thesis:	Assessment of stability of international strategic alliances

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.	<u>5</u>	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.	<u>5</u>	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.	<u>5</u>	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.	<u>5</u>	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.	<u>5</u>	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.	<u>5</u>	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	<u>4</u>	3	2

Each item above is evaluated on the following scale, as applicable: 5 = the thesis meets all the requirements, 4 = the thesis meets almost all the requirements, 3 = a lot of the requirements are not met in the thesis, 2 = the thesis does not meet the requirements.

Additional comments:

The thesis is well motivated, the author explains why joint ventures appears and how the effectiveness of this alliance can be evaluated.

The thesis is organized in three chapters. First chapter presents theoretical background where the author defines all the notations and considers the methodology of the research. It is important that the author made quite deep literature review and analyzed different approaches both to the alliances and stability. In the same chapter the author proposes methodology of assessment of international strategic alliances which in fact combines other methods existing in the literature that is it includes an assessment of motivational, dynamic and strategic stability. The research comprises an extensive and well-structured analysis of a large amount of related work, putting existing research into relation and into the context and research questions of the thesis.

In order to test the suggested methodology the author comprises case study research in the second chapter of the thesis which is well motivated, and the author details how this approach is adequate to address the research questions. Three cases in gas and oil industry where one can observe appearance of

alliances are analyzed. For each case, the author clearly describes the background and setting needed for the research question.

In the last chapter the author applies provided methodology of stability of international strategic alliances assessment for each case.

The thesis is well layouted and formatted. However there are some drawbacks of the thesis, namely:

- There are conclusions after each chapter missing which could ease the understanding of the impact of the author.
- Several tables are not formatted according to the Regulations.
- The list of appendixes is not included in the Table of content.

The strength of the conducted research was also confirmed by two papers published in Vestnik of St. Petersburg State University. Management Series by the author during Zhalya Mamedova's work on her thesis.

Master thesis of Zhalia Mamedova meets the requirements of the Master in International Business program, and according to the reviewer's opinion deserves an "excellent (A)" grade, thus the author can be given the desired degree.

14.06.2015

Referee: Assistant Professor, Margarita Gladkova

