REFEREE'S REVIEW

Program:	Master in Corporate Finance
Student:	Liliia Bulatova
Title of thesis:	Stock market reaction to dividend surprises: evidence from the emerging markets of Russia, India and China

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 thesis is devoted to the topic of stock market reaction to dividend announcement on several emerging markets. The goal of the research is to empirically investigate the average reaction of emerging BRICS markets of Russia, India and China to dividend surprises. The topic is very actual and interesting. The lack of such research on emerging markets in general and on the Russian market in particular brings additional value to the Master thesis. The work consists of three chapters, introduction, conclusion, bibliography and appendixes. The author applies regression analysis to conduct the research. The chosen methods are absolutely suitable to achieve the goal. The data that is collected for the research is valuable and clearly structured.

The first part of the work is devoted to the theoretical bases of the research of dividend payments. The author provides a very deep analysis of literature with up-to-date sources of information. The second chapter reveals information about specifics of three markets: Russian, Indian and Chinese. The data that is presented in the second chapter is very actual with clear explanation and specification. The third chapter is devoted to empirical research and results implication. The theoretical and practical parts of the work are clearly linked. There are some comments concerning the thesis:

1. The Figures that are presented in Chapter 2 for different markets are not comparable. The author provides information about dividend yield of the companies from MICEX index for the Russian market (Figure 6), then some examples of particular companies are highlighted. For the Indian market the author shows information about dividend payout ratio in automotive industry (Figure 12) and then in IT industry (Figure 13). But for Chinese market no information about dynamics of dividend yield or payout ratio is provided for comparison. So it is quite difficult to compare the trend of dividend yield (or payout) for the three markets analyzed in the work.

2. It would be interesting to have a brief comparison of the obtained results with the same kind of the research on the developed market. Some points that differ emerging markets from the developed ones would bring additional value to the research.

Master thesis of Liliia Bulatova fully meets the requirements of MCF program, and according to the reviewer's opinion deserves an "excellent A" grade, thus the author can be given the desired degree.

Referee:

Tatiana A. Garanina,
Associate Professor, Candidate Degree in Economics
Department of Finance and Accounting
Graduate School of Management,
St. Petersburg University