

REFEREE'S REVIEW

Program:	MITIM
Student:	Iuliia Zhabina
Title of thesis:	Application of open innovation paradigm in the railway companies

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	<u>4</u>	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.	5	<u>4</u>	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	<u>4</u>	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	<u>4</u>	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	<u>4</u>	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.	<u>5</u>	4	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:

Literature review focuses on several key sources, which fit the scope of research well. Still, the feeling is that Author could produce certain analytical and comparative table herself, instead of taking them directly from existing literature. In other words, the contribution of the critical literature review might be stronger though interdependent analysis and comparison of the sources instead of direct adoption of already produced analysis by other authors.

One of the questions that arises is why should railway companies adopt open innovation paradigm? Is it that obvious that they are going to obtain the benefits which are needed and cannot be obtained otherwise? The research questions formulated by the Author are implying these assumptions but they are just indicatively discussed in the paper (pp 32-33). It would be advised to elaborate this point even in more detail with some references to existing practices and examples.

Thesis is based on multiple case study methodology which is well described and presented in the methodology session. Still, each case's description itself is quite concise and is followed by a comparative stage. It would be desirable to introduce the scheme and criteria for case studies comparison in advance, linking these criteria to the theory in a more profound way.

The strong side of the analysis is that Author is combining comparative analysis of case studies with introduction of a more qualitative perspective, e.g. quotations on the key points. This strong side of the analysis could be extended in an even more profound way however, e.g. addressing each phase of the open innovation paradigm adoption.

The overall impression of the thesis is that the thesis follows a logical organization, is generally well structured, all the steps are commented by the Author. Still, as mentioned above, almost each of the stages could be at least somewhat strengthened and a truly critical approach in analysis and interpretation could be applied.

Master thesis of Julia Zhabina meets the requirements of the MITIM program, and according to the reviewer's opinion deserves a/an "good (B)" grade, thus the author can be given the desired degree.

Date June, 12th



Referee: Dr., Asc. Prof. Maria M. Smirnova