Program: Master in Information Technologies and Innovation Management

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.

The thesis of Iuliia Zhabina focuses on the use of open innovation in the railway industry. The contrast between an established industry and its need to adopt modern methods for innovation in this industry provide a clear motivation for this type of research. The topic is well motivated and original, it’s aim and objective clearly described.

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.

The thesis is well organized and structured. It is easy for the reader to follow the overall flow. The theoretical background, methodology, case studies and results are well balanced.

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.

The author manages to provide a clear overview of the theoretical background, including recent research results, and derives from it the research objectives that are formulated in distinct research questions. The selected industry provides an especially interesting context to explore the research questions.

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.

The author conducted a multiple case study with the railway companies in Germany, Russia and the UK. For each case, there is an in-depth description of the case context that accurately describes the local peculiarities. The methods used to gather the data are clearly rationalized and well grounded.

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.

The author shows a high command of understanding and using the existing models of open innovation. The author related the findings for the research questions back to the original literature and identifies the opportunities and challenges to apply the theoretical concepts in the context of the railway industry. She uses the scientific approaches to tackle real world problems.

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.

Especially the comparison between countries shows the different approach of applying open innovation in railway industry. Managers in this industry can benefit from this research by learning from practice in other countries. The study shows a number of motivations and existing drivers to implement open innovation methods for railway industries.

Quality of thesis layout. Layout fulfils the requirements of the Regulations for master thesis preparation and defence, correct layout of tables, figures, references.

The thesis is very well layouted, references, tables and figures are consistently used and described.

The Master thesis of Iuliia Zhabina meets the requirements for master thesis of Master in Information Technologies and Innovation Management program thus the author of the thesis can be awarded the required degree.