

Report on Bachelor / Master Thesis

Institute of Economic Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University in Prague

Student:	Marek Ehrenberger
Advisor:	PhDr. Wadim Strielkowski Ph.D.
Title of the thesis:	Innovation in small and medium enterprises

OVERALL ASSESSMENT (provided in English, Czech, or Slovak):

The thesis discusses determinants of innovation activities of SMEs in the Czech Republic. The author's contribution lies mainly in providing a whole new evidence on micro-level conditions for development of new or innovated products and services among SMEs. The author conducted an empirical survey (with over 1100 responses from existing businesses) on a level which I find extraordinary for bachelor thesis. It clearly demonstrates author's ability to carefully prepare a questionnaire based on hypotheses and stratification/sampling design, handle the data and apply an econometric model. The analysis is adequately visualized by quality charts and tables. I also appreciate references to current events such as patent wars etc. The level of the text is good with some minor typing errors, missing or redundant words. Review of literature is adequate.

There are few things that made me to mark down some of the scores a bit. I suggest these points for discussion during the defense so that the author has an opportunity of proving me wrong or it can serve as an suggestion for further work on this promising topic:

- I understand that the thesis is intended to be mainly empirical, but setting up a simple underlying theoretical model before implementing it empirically would bring the thesis among the top-level theses.
- The author promises in the introductory chapters that the thesis provides an evidence implicating that SMEs (as opposed to large corporates) should be the target group of the Czech government's support. Similar propositions can be found on few more places in the text. It is my understanding that instead of an evidence on „whether or not the government should support it“, we rather get an evidence on „how to support it“ in the thesis, since no evidence on large corporates is given. In general, policy implication part is weak. Perhaps omitting this part or better wording would solve it.
- While I acknowledge author's readiness to present his own opinion on the subject, I recommend the author to refrain from expressions such as „We can only hope that...“ and some other forms of showing one's emotions in an academic/scientific text.
- We can assume that the sample of SMEs is to a large extent heterogeneous. Determinants of innovation activity may vary across the entities (IT sector vs. agriculture etc...). Does the author deal with this issue in the empirical model? Estimating the model separately for each industry or including categorical/dummy variables may increase the explanatory power (fit) of the model. As this goes beyond bachelor-level statistics I did not reflect it in the evaluation.

SUMMARY OF POINTS AWARDED (for details, see below):

CATEGORY	POINTS
<i>Literature</i> (max. 20 points)	17
<i>Methods</i> (max. 30 points)	27
<i>Contribution</i> (max. 30 points)	30
<i>Manuscript Form</i> (max. 20 points)	17
TOTAL POINTS (max. 100 points)	91
GRADE (1 – 2 – 3 – 4)	1

NAME OF THE REFEREE: Mgr. Václav Hausenblas

DATE OF EVALUATION: 6.6.2012

Referee Signature

EXPLANATION OF CATEGORIES AND SCALE:

LITERATURE REVIEW: *The thesis demonstrates author's full understanding and command of recent literature. The author quotes relevant literature in a proper way.*

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0

METHODS: *The tools used are relevant to the research question being investigated, and adequate to the author's level of studies. The thesis topic is comprehensively analyzed.*

Strong Average Weak
30 15 0

CONTRIBUTION: *The author presents original ideas on the topic demonstrating critical thinking and ability to draw conclusions based on the knowledge of relevant theory and empirics. There is a distinct value added of the thesis.*

Strong Average Weak
30 15 0

MANUSCRIPT FORM: *The thesis is well structured. The student uses appropriate language and style, including academic format for graphs and tables. The text effectively refers to graphs and tables and disposes with a complete bibliography.*

Strong Average Weak
20 10 0

Overall grading:

TOTAL POINTS	GRADE		
81 – 100	1	= excellent	= výborně
61 – 80	2	= good	= velmi dobře
41 – 60	3	= satisfactory	= dobře
0 – 40	4	= fail	= nedoporučuji k obhajobě