

REVIEW

Regarding: evaluation of a dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the doctoral program "Economics and Management (Industry)" at the Academy of Economics "D. A. Tsenov"-Svishtov

Reviewer: **Assoc. Prof. Sergey Todorov Naydenov, PhD**, Department of Industrial Business and Entrepreneurship, Academy of Economics "D. A. Tsenov"-Svishtov, scientific specialty 05.02.18 Economics and Management (Industry).

Author of the dissertation: **Feim Azem Brava**, PhD, student in part-time at the Department of Industrial Business and Entrepreneurship, Doctoral Program Economics and Management (Industry).

Dissertation topic: "IMPACT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING ON THE ACQUISITION OF COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES "

Reason for preparing the review: pursuant to an order No. 662/05.07.2024 of the Rector of the Academy of Economics "D. A. Tsenov"-Svishtov for the opening of a procedure for public defense of a dissertation work and confirmation of the composition of the scientific jury, as well as Decision of the scientific jury at the first meeting, held on 07/05/2024.

1. General presentation of the dissertation:

The subject of the study is in-depth scientific information about entrepreneurial identity, necessary for entrepreneurial competencies that will allow entrepreneurs to achieve competitive advantage.

The dissertation has a total volume of 194 pages and is structured in: an introduction, a main text of three chapters and a conclusion. A declaration of originality and authenticity is provided.

The structure of the dissertation is balanced and logically consistent. A variety of research methods and approaches were used. The research thesis,

purpose and tasks respond directly to the research and find their verification in the results obtained. The restrictions introduced are well-founded and allow for a thorough scientific investigation.

Chapter 1 introduces the professional reader to the nature of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship education and their impact on the competitiveness and competitive advantages of SMEs. The doctoral student, through a critical reading of well-known scientific works, characterizes entrepreneurship as an engine of socio-economic development, defines the entrepreneur as the main figure in the entrepreneurial process. It fully outlines both the professional and personal qualities that must be possessed and acquired in order to deploy the entrepreneur in the business environment. He makes a different reading of competence, introducing us to examples from reality. Undoubtedly, the focus of this chapter is the role of entrepreneurship education. Argumentatively, the doctoral student defends the various forms of education, justifying herself with research results and citations. The summaries reached by the author are presented in specific conclusions.

In **chapter 2**, the doctoral student presents the methodological foundations of the research, outlining the problematic - subject framework and relevance. Two options are available. The first is that learning is a fundamental and integral part of the entrepreneurial process, in which the human, social and behavioral activities are as important as the economic aspects. The second is the conceptual model that explains that the process of entrepreneurship education can and should be applied to achieve high

economic results. Understandably, approaches and research tools are used to present these options.

Chapter 3 analyzes the results of the research. The research sample is characterized, introducing us to the gender and age of the respondents and the years of operation of the organizations. The doctoral student tests the individual hypotheses and sub-hypotheses, presenting the results in tabular form. In the analysis and testing of the hypotheses, the relationship between the entrepreneur and risk-taking is considered and investigated, as well as the importance of the effect of risk-taking in achieving competitive advantage. It is the researcher's position that the development of a skills initiative through entrepreneurship education will positively influence the achievement of a competitive advantage for SMEs.

In conclusion, the PhD student summarizes that the success of small and medium-sized enterprises depends on the entrepreneurial competencies possessed by the entrepreneurs and the way they apply them in their daily activities. Entrepreneurship education is an integral part of the entrepreneurial process in which economic, human, social and behavioral activities are particularly important. On this basis, a conceptual model has been developed that provides a rationale that the entrepreneurship education process is applicable in entrepreneurship education and development. Through entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurs create new knowledge and create a new reality, which shows the fact of mutual relationship between entrepreneurship and learning.

The list of used literature consists of 133 sources, of which 130 are in Latin and 3 are in Cyrillic.

The applications, with a total volume of 11 pages, are 2 in number. The information in the dissertation is visualized in 9 figures and 61 tables.

II. Assessment of the form and content of the dissertation

1. Assessment of the relevance of the scientific problem developed in the dissertation

The topic of the dissertation is current, formulated correctly and is of interest to both science and business practice.

As the primary goal of each future employee, their personal contribution to the provision of a high level of service, quality and product value is seen, and fostering an entrepreneurial spirit in them will enable them to acquire the appropriate entrepreneurial competencies at all levels of the organization as a quality foundation for organizational development.

Entrepreneurial learning has emerged as an important but still underdeveloped and, to some extent, misunderstood area of research. It focuses on the development of this field from the perspective of socially constructed learning based on the experiences and behavior of entrepreneurs in SMEs. Entrepreneurial competencies and the relationship to entrepreneurship education as a function of their development represent a particular challenge for researchers. As a result of the present study, in-depth and versatile information is obtained about the entrepreneurial identity, the necessary entrepreneurial competencies that allow entrepreneurs to achieve a competitive advantage. Entrepreneurship training becomes a major resource for production and development. Knowledge as the main determinant of human capital is an important factor

for the management of SMEs and the creation of added value for organizations.

2. Considerations regarding the volume of the dissertation work, the tools used, the degree of development of the researched issues and the use of economic language

I consider the dissertation work to be original scientific research. The doctoral dissertation is structured in three parts: theoretical development of the issues concerning entrepreneurship, entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial education and their impact on competitiveness and competitive advantage. The second part includes a presentation of the research methodology. The third part contains the data obtained with the methodological toolkit, on the basis of which an analysis is made, conclusions are drawn and recommendations for future research are given. My conclusion is that the doctoral student within this volume has managed to develop his scientific position and defend his thesis.

The research toolkit is diverse and includes the application of scientific methods such as: induction, deduction, analysis, synthesis, comparative analysis, survey method. Statistical hypothesis testing is performed with a software product designed for this purpose.

Despite the language of expression foreign to the doctoral student, the perfection of the use of economic terminology has been achieved, which will provide the professional reader with an intelligibility of the scientific work. Language and style indicate knowledge of the specific terminology in the scientific field under study.

3. Opinion as to how far the abstract accurately and completely reflects the dissertation work

The presented abstract in a volume of 56 standard pages reflects to the necessary extent the structure and content of the developed dissertation work. Five publications are attached to the dissertation. Two of them were developed in co-authorship, and the three - independently. In this way, the doctoral student fulfills the minimum national requirements for ONS - "doctor", by collecting 35 points according to the indicators from group G, out of the required 30.

The report with the plagiarism check, the submitted declaration give assurance of independence in scientific research and the scientific results achieved by the doctoral student and do not call into question the correctness of the developed dissertation work.

III. Scientific and scientific-applied contributions of the dissertation work

The Statement of Contributions presented in the abstract accurately and correctly reflects the main achievements of the doctoral student in the overall research, which gives me the reason to confirm the specified contributions. The contributions have a scientific and scientific-applied character and I believe that they further develop the theoretical propositions in the field of entrepreneurship education and the impact they have on competitive advantage. I have allowed myself to synthesize them in the following form:

1. The theoretical knowledge in the field of entrepreneurship training and entrepreneurial competencies has been enriched. An approach was applied in which the entrepreneurial identity was examined through the lens of entrepreneurial learning. The competitive advantages of small and medium enterprises are systematized.

2. A research toolkit was developed and tested to assess the impact of entrepreneurial training on the acquisition of competitive advantages of small and medium-sized enterprises.

3. An author's systematization of entrepreneurial competencies has been prepared, the acquisition of which in the process of entrepreneurial training will allow small and medium-sized enterprises to achieve a competitive advantage.

4. A conceptual-categorical model has been developed for the impact of entrepreneurial training on the competitive advantage of SMEs through entrepreneurial roles, entrepreneurial orientation and competencies for personal effectiveness and workplace competencies.

IV. Dissertation critical notes, questions and recommendations

PhD student Feim Brava has successfully completed his research assignment. But notes may be given to aid his future research.

✓ To be more convincing in asserting his opinion, especially when it is substantiated with quotes from other authors;

✓ When analyzing a problem, to try to study it from more and different sides.

Questions:

1. Why is the topic of entrepreneurship widely discussed in society today?
2. What prospects for entrepreneurs does entrepreneurship education provide?

V. Summary Conclusion and Opinion

The presented dissertation work of Ph.D. student **Feim Azem Brava** on the topic "**IMPACT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING ON THE ACQUISITION OF COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES**" is an independent study that requires its author to have rich economic knowledge. The main goal has been achieved, the scientific hypotheses have been tested and the research thesis has been proven. Bearing in mind all this and the outlined merits of a contributing nature, I believe that the presented dissertation meets the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its implementation. This gives me sufficient grounds to declare my positive vote for the awarding of the educational and scientific degree "doctor" to **Feim Azem Brava** in professional direction 3.8. Economics, Doctoral Program "Economics and Management (Industry)".

30.07.2024

city of Svishtov

Reviewer:

(Assoc. prof. Sergey Naydenov, PhD)