

REVIEW

of the dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree
"doctor"

Review: Prof. Pencho Penchev, DSc

Professional direction: 3.7. Administration and Management

Author of the dissertation: Feim Azem Brava

Dissertation topic:

IMPACT OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING ON THE ACQUISITION OF COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES OF SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES

submitted for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "doctor"
by professional direction 3.8. "Economics", PhD program "Economics and
Management (Industry)"

I. General presentation of the dissertation work

Feim Azem Brava's dissertation on the topic: "Impact of entrepreneurship training on the acquisition of competitive advantages of small and medium-sized enterprises" is supervised by Assoc. Prof. Iskra Penteeleva and Prof. Dr. Lyubcho Varamezov. It is in a volume of 196 pages. Structurally, it consists of an introduction, an exposition in three chapters, a conclusion and appendices. To reinforce the presentation, 9 figures and 61 tables are indicated.

For the **purposes** of the research, the doctoral student used information from 133 literary works, of which 130 are in Latin and 3 in Cyrillic. He demonstrates a very good literature awareness and in-depth knowledge of theoretical and practical research in the given field.

The **volume** of the dissertation work, the visual aids (figures and tables), as well as the processed scientific literature and collected practical information meet the requirements for similar types of scientific works.

The topicality of the topic is determined by the generally recognized fact that, at the current stage, the development of the world economy today is characterized by a change in its business philosophy and focuses on the human factor and its creative potential - knowledge, experience and competences. As the author emphasizes: "Building a knowledge-based society is a process that must operate continuously, taking into account the economic and social context of society. As a function of its own development, each country must create the conditions for economic activities with higher added value, better and more productive jobs, social prosperity and use of its own resources in accordance with the philosophy of sustainable development.

II. Assessment of the form and content of the dissertation

Although there are many studies on entrepreneurship that look at this category from different perspectives, there are still many "white fields" that need to be explored. Such is entrepreneurial learning, an important but still underdeveloped and somewhat misunderstood and underappreciated area of research. Therefore, the efforts of the author's dissertation to focus on the development of entrepreneurial science from the perspective of socially constructed learning, which is based on the experience and learning behavior of entrepreneurs in small and medium-sized structural units, should be positively evaluated.

The **main goal** set by the doctoral student is to investigate the impact of entrepreneurial training on the acquisition of competitive advantages of small and medium-sized enterprises. In addition, the current research emphasizes the role of entrepreneurial identity and defines the necessary entrepreneurial knowledge,

skills and competencies, the acquisition of which will enable entrepreneurs to achieve a competitive advantage.

The **tasks** for achieving the main goal and proving the thus formulated general and special hypotheses are:

a) analysis and evaluation of specialized literature in the field of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial identity and competence, competitive advantages and competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises;

b) development of a methodological approach and methodological toolkit for researching the impact of entrepreneurial training on the acquisition of competitive advantages of these structural units;

c) conducting an empirical study, the results of which will show whether the accepted hypotheses are confirmed or rejected.

The **object** of research is entrepreneurial training.

The **subject** of the study is the impact of entrepreneurial training on the acquisition of competitive advantages by small and medium-sized enterprises.

The **research methodology** implies the use of a number of scientific methods, such as: the methods of induction and deduction, analysis, synthesis and comparative analysis, etc.

The **main information sources** that are used in the dissertation work are: specialized scientific literature on the subject of the dissertation research (textbooks, monographs, books, scientific studies and articles, collections of scientific forums, etc.); official information from statistical institutions; data from empirical studies with a theme and scope close to the present study; information from observations and registration of statistical data; Internet sites, databases, etc., in the field of entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial competences and the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises, etc. A special questionnaire was developed for the collection of empirical data.

A dissertation cannot claim complete fundamentality and comprehensiveness, as it builds on familiar theories and concepts and seeks their further development and application in a specific environment. Therefore, a good impression is made by the fact that the author introduces a number of restrictive conditions regarding:

- a) the subject of research;
- b) the scope of the surveyed companies;
- (c) the study period.

Chapter one "Theoretical development of the problem" is 52 pages long and consists of 4 paragraphs. . It explores entrepreneurship as well as the place, role and importance of entrepreneurs. Necessary attention is given to entrepreneurial training. The competitiveness and competitive advantages of small and medium-sized enterprises are shown

Chapter two "Methodological foundations of the research" is 45 pages long and includes the following paragraphs: a) problem-subject framework; b) topicality; c) conceptual-categorical model; d) purpose and tasks; e) hypothetical framework; f) methodical approach; g) research tools.

In the third chapter, which is in a volume of 61 pages, an analysis of the results of the research was made. More specifically, a profile of the respondents was made, hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2 were tested. The necessary place was allocated to hypothesis testing with correlation analysis. An interpretation of the hypothetical framework is made.

In the **conclusion** of the dissertation, the thesis is again presented that the success of small and medium-sized enterprises depends on the entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and competences possessed by the entrepreneurs and the way in which they are applied in practice. It is recalled that the subject of research in the dissertation work is the question of how entrepreneurial competencies are related to the achievement of a competitive advantage of small and medium-sized enterprises. It highlights the role and perspectives of entrepreneurship education

in the function of developing entrepreneurial competencies and their impact on the business performance and/or success of these structural units.

The scientific style of the work presented is good, taking into account the fact that the doctoral student writes in a foreign language, and then the material is translated into Bulgarian, and it is possible that ambiguities may occur during the translation. The proposed device is durable, and the data and calculations are correct.

The citations are also correct, no data or suspicions of plagiarism have been established.

The dissertation research is well balanced, focused and purposeful. The scientific problems are clearly formulated, and the scientific theses and proposals are well-founded.

The **abstract** has a volume of 56 pages and accurately and fully reflects the work. Attached to it are also a Reference on the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements in connection with the procedure for acquiring the ONS "doctor", List of scientific publications, Reference of the candidate's participation in national and international scientific conferences and forums for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree. doctor' and Declaration of originality and authenticity.

III. Main contributing points of the dissertation work

I accept that the submitted dissertation contains the contributions indicated in the abstract and is the personal work of the candidate. In my opinion, they could have been specified as follows:

1. Based on a study of literary sources, the theoretical knowledge in the field of entrepreneurship education and entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and competences has been enriched.

2. An approach in which the entrepreneurial identity is examined through the prism of entrepreneurial education is derived.

3. The positive sides of small and medium-sized enterprises are brought out.

4. 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.

5. The author argues for entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and competences, which through the process of entrepreneurship education will allow small and medium-sized enterprises to achieve a competitive advantage.

6. A conceptual-categorical model was developed for the impact of entrepreneurial training on the competitive advantage of small and medium-sized enterprises through entrepreneurial roles, entrepreneurial orientation and personal effectiveness competencies and workplace competencies.

The presented list is of 5 scientific publications. It can be concluded from them that they cover topics close to that of the dissertation, which means that the problems considered by the author have resonated in scientific circles and publications, which makes the researched problem known to the interested public.

IV. Critical notes, questions and recommendations

My main criticisms are in terms of presentation style – overly long sentences, reversed word order, repetition, etc. I explain these weaknesses by the fact that the doctoral student is a foreigner and has difficulties with the presentation of Bulgarian.

I have the following questions for Feim Azem Brava:

1. Are the terms "manager" and "entrepreneur" the same?
2. What are the basic entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and competences?
3. Can universality be sought in the training of entrepreneurs or should the environment in which they carry out their activity be the leading one?

V. Summary conclusion and opinion

The dissertation is a complete, in-depth and conscientious scientific study of an always relevant and socially significant system - the educational system. The study contains substantial contributions and concrete recommendations in the training of entrepreneurs.

PhD student Feim Azem Brava knows the basic literature and good practices in the relevant field well enough, can clearly formulate research problems, analyze, evaluate and systematize and critically think about different theories and concepts, construct a research apparatus, conduct scientific research, make reasoned conclusions and justify proposals for improvement of management practice. Summarizing, I will note that the dissertation complies with all regulatory requirements.

The submitted reference shows that the minimum national requirements in relation to the procedure for acquiring the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" have been met.

All this gives me reason to recommend to the Scientific Jury to award Feim Azem Brava the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in professional direction 3.8. "Economics", doctoral program "Economics and Management (Economics)".

20/07/2024

V. Tarnovo

Reviewer:

(Prof. Pencho Penchev, DSc.)