

OPINION

of a member of the scientific jury, determined by Order 662/05.07.2024.

of the Rector of Tsenov Academy of Economics, Svishtov, regarding
dissertation for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "doctor"

Opinion by Prof. Dr. Lyuben Dimitrov Kirev, higher education area 3.
Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction 3.8. Economy

Author of the dissertation: Doctoral student Feim Azem Brava, PhD
program "Economics and Management (Industry)"

Dissertation topic: "Impact of entrepreneurship education on the
acquisition of competitive advantages of small and medium-sized enterprises"

I. General presentation of the dissertation work

1. Subject

The subject of research of the dissertation is the impact of entrepreneurial training on the acquisition of competitive advantages by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and the object of research is entrepreneurial training. The stated objective is "investigating the impact of entrepreneurial training on the acquisition of competitive advantages by SMEs". The role of entrepreneurial identity is emphasized and entrepreneurial competencies are defined, the acquisition of which ensures the obtaining of competitive advantages by SMEs. For the realization of the set goal, three research tasks have been identified, which correspond to the structure and content of the dissertation work. The thesis is defended that "entrepreneurship training that develops entrepreneurial competencies for personal effectiveness and workplace competencies lead to the acquisition of competitive advantages by SMEs. A general hypothesis, special hypotheses 1 and 2, as well as individual hypotheses 1.1-4 and 2.1-4 are formulated.

2. Volume

The dissertation is in a volume of 196 standard pages, the study is visualized with 9 figures and 61 tables.

3. Structure

The structure of the dissertation work is classic for this kind of research and consists of an introduction, an exposition in three chapters, a conclusion, a list of the literature used, and a Declaration of originality and reliability. The structure

is balanced and logical, based on the deductive approach from the general to the particular and the singular. It reflects the stated aim and objectives and contributes to the development of the study and justification of the research thesis.

Introduction. The introductory part contains all the necessary structural elements for an introductory part. The relevance of the research, the subject and the object of the research are determined, the aim and research objectives are established, the research thesis and hypotheses (general, special and individual), the logical-theoretical research methods used, the approval of the analysis performed in the dissertation are stated. The theoretical and empirical basis of the analysis, the restrictive perimeter of the study in terms of the subject of the study, the scope and the period of the study are correctly indicated.

Chapter one is in the nature of a scientific-theoretical statement of the problem. In it, attention is directed to clarifying the essence of entrepreneurship and the figure of the entrepreneur, entrepreneurial identity through the prism of entrepreneurship education, entrepreneurial competences and entrepreneurial education and the related competitiveness and competitive advantages of SMEs.

Chapter two reveals the methodological foundations of the research. It outlines the problem-subject framework of the study, its relevance and practical tasks, the conceptual-categorical model, the purpose and tasks of the analysis, the hypothetical framework and the adopted methodological approach and research tools.

Chapter three is devoted to the analysis of the research results. The profile of the respondents was outlined (gender; age of the respondents and of the organizations; the size distribution of the organizations according to the number of employees; the field of activity), the verification of the raised hypotheses 1 and 2 was checked by using correlation analysis.

Conclusion. As a summary of the study, it presents the main results and conclusions of the study.

4. Literature

Doctoral student Feim Brava has used 133 sources related to the topic of the dissertation, of which 130 sources are in Latin and 3 in Cyrillic.

5. Appendices

The secondary data, called raw by the doctoral student, used in the development of the dissertation work are presented in two appendices in the form of tables.

II. Assessment of the form and content of the dissertation

1. Assessment of the relevance and development of researched in the dissertation scientific problem

Along with the other factors of production such as capital, labor and land, entrepreneurship is gaining significant importance as one of the engines of economic development. In-depth works by world-renowned economists, as well as the works of a number of Bulgarian and foreign authors, are devoted to the essence, functions, role and importance of this fourth factor of production. Somehow aside from the research issues of entrepreneurship, questions about entrepreneurship education remain. The dissertation developed by Feim Brava is dedicated to the extremely current and important problem of entrepreneurship education as a prerequisite for the development of entrepreneurial behavior and the acquisition of entrepreneurial competences and increasing the competitiveness of SMEs.

2. Opinion on the language, volume and instrumentation of the dissertation

The style of dissertation is concise, the language understandable and precise, which is sometimes difficult for foreign authors. The use of the scientific apparatus is precise and correct, the visualization of the analyzed questions with tables and figures is at a high level.

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

The abstract is developed in accordance with the requirements and accurately and fully reflects the content of the dissertation work. In addition, the abstract also contains a Declaration of originality and credibility, Reference for the main contributing points in the dissertation work, List of scientific publications, Reference for the fulfillment of the minimum national requirements in connection with the procedure for acquiring the educational and scientific degree "doctor" (35 collected points from a group of indicators "G" with required 30 points). The doctoral student participated in six international scientific conferences and the doctoral scientific session of the Tsenov Academy of Economics in 2023.

III. Scientific and scientifically applied contributions of the dissertation

The doctoral student's achievements of a contribution nature can be classified as follows:

First. The role of entrepreneurship education for the acquisition of entrepreneurial competencies and entrepreneurial identity and their application in practice has been revealed. The dependence between entrepreneurial training, the acquisition of entrepreneurial spirit and competences, and the provision of competitive advantages to SMEs is deduced. It is argued that sustainable competitive advantages can be achieved by SMEs through the organization and implementation of entrepreneurial training;

Second. The essence of entrepreneurship training is defined, the goals of the training itself, the competencies that distinguish the entrepreneurial spirit and their definitions, the unfavorable conditions (obstacles) that hinder the adoption of entrepreneurship training are clarified. The grouping of entrepreneurial competencies (for personal effectiveness and workplace competencies) is successful, the five organizational level dimensions of entrepreneurial orientation and the determinants of organizational success are presented;

Third. The content of entrepreneurial competencies for personal effectiveness (development of interpersonal skills, risk-taking, initiative, responsibility) and workplace competencies (creativity, innovation, customer focus, problem-solving skills) is clarified. The acquisition of both types of competences through entrepreneurship training is considered as a prerequisite for the realization of competitive advantages by SMEs;

Fourth. The doctoral student's ability to conduct independent empirical research, as evidenced by a representative survey. The prerequisites for a successful empirical study are the outlined problem-subject framework of the analysis, its relevance, the conceptual categorical model and the goals and tasks of the empirical study, the hypothetical framework, the methodological approach and the research toolkit;

Fifth. The PhD candidate's model of the impact of entrepreneurial education on the competitive advantages of small and medium-sized enterprises based on entrepreneurial roles, entrepreneurial organizations, personal effectiveness competencies and workplace competencies.

IV. Critical Notes and Dissertation Questions

Some critical remarks and recommendations for the future research activity of the doctoral student can be made on the dissertation work.

1. Minor repetitions are allowed in some places in the exposition. On page 94, figure №4 is titled “conceptual-categorical model” and on page 166 the same figure is repeated as “practically deterministic conceptual-categorical model”.

2. Probably due to an oversight in the content of the abstract, the titles of the individual chapters of the dissertation are correctly indicated, and in the statement of the main content of the dissertation, the second and third chapters have the same title "Methodological foundations of the research". Similarly, in the introduction of the dissertation, the research thesis, the object, the subject and the purpose of the research are substantiated, but the scientific tasks to achieve the intended goal, which properly exist in the abstract, are missing.

I have the following question for the doctoral student: Chapters one and two deal with the relationship between entrepreneurial education and entrepreneurial competencies - competitiveness and competitive advantages of SMEs. When revealing the profile of the respondents, it is not about SMEs, but about the organizations (figures 6,7,8). What kind of organizations are we talking about?

The indicated notes are rather of an editorial nature and do not detract from the indicated qualities and contributing points of the dissertation.

V. Summary evaluation of the dissertation work and conclusion

Feim Brava's dissertation work is a completed and in-depth study, dedicated to an actual and significant problem for theory and practice. With it, Feim Brava presents himself as an in-depth researcher and competent connoisseur of entrepreneurial training and its importance for acquiring entrepreneurial competencies and increasing the competitiveness of SMEs. The conclusions and generalizations made complement and enrich the existing knowledge and the application of the existing theory in the analysis of specific economic problems. These merits and the above-mentioned contributing points fully correspond to the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, its regulations and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the Tsenov Academy of Economics, Svishnov. This is sufficient reason to propose to the other members of the respected Scientific Jury to vote for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor" to Feim Brava in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction 3.8 Economics, scientific specialty "Economics and Management (Industry)".

20/07/2024
Sofia

Opinion's author:
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