

## **REVIEW**

**by Prof. D.S. Vanya Kuzdova Banabakova**

in the field of higher education 3. "Social, economic and legal sciences",  
professional direction 3.7. "Administration and Management",  
scientific specialty "Organization and management outside the field of  
material production",  
„Vasil Levski“ National Military University, Veliko Tarnovo

of a Dissertation with an author

**Pencho Malinov Malinov**

**On the topic: "Achieving competitiveness by implementing innovative  
strategies (following the example of companies in the industrial sector)"**

for the award of an educational and scientific degree "Doctor"

Professional direction: 3.7. Administration and management

in the Ph D program "Social Management"

## **I. General presentation of the dissertation.**

The reason for this review is the Order of the Rector of Business Academy "D. A. Tsenov ", Svishtov, № 315 of 11.05.2022

The presented dissertation is focused on current scientific issues for the world and the country, related to the need to increase the competitiveness of companies due to dynamically changing market conditions, macro-environmental factors and growing competition and in this direction search for adequate opportunities and strategies.

The dissertation is developed in a total volume of 168 pages, of which the main text is 159 pages, and includes a list of abbreviations used, a list of figures and tables, an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, a list of references and an appendix. The dissertation presents 11 tables and 8 figures.

100 literature sources were used, of which 54 in Cyrillic, 40 in Latin and 6 electronic resources.

## **II. Assessment of the form and content of the dissertation.**

The topic of the dissertation and the development itself are extremely relevant and this is determined by the following prerequisites, trends and conditions: highly competitive environment in the industrial sector requires a search for opportunities to increase the competitiveness of individual companies; the main source of opportunities in this direction are the innovations and respectively the implementation of adequate innovation strategies; there is also a need to develop and build effective and stable systems for achieving competitiveness through the implementation of innovation strategies; the opportunities for increasing competitiveness and the applied innovation strategies are specific, according to the macro-environmental factors, differentiated by regions and market conditions; there is not enough research related to the methodological, methodological and scientific-applied aspects of the current issues and others.

The introduction substantiates the topicality of the topic and defines precisely and clearly the object, the subject, the goal and the research thesis.

**The object** of this dissertation is the competitiveness of organizations.

**The subject** of the study is the competitiveness of organizations through the implementation of innovation strategies (following the example of companies in the industrial sector).

The main **goal** of the dissertation is to study the specific mechanisms by which competitiveness is achieved through the application of innovative strategies.

**Research tasks** are logically divided into tasks of theoretical and research nature and tasks of practical and applied nature.

The dissertation is based on **the research thesis** that if business organizations working in the industrial sector do not implement innovative strategies, they cannot achieve a high degree of competitiveness.

In developing the dissertation and to achieve the goal, solving research problems and proving the research thesis are used research approaches and methods such as: analysis and synthesis, content analysis, survey methods - survey

and interview, observation method, SWOT-analysis, induction and deduction, graphical and tabular presentation of information and others.

Specific restrictive conditions of the study have been defined, mainly of spatial and temporal nature and those related to ensuring the representativeness of the sample in the conducted empirical study.

The main empirical research and analysis in the dissertation is based on a study conducted through a survey and a semi-standardized interview, which involves three companies operating in the industrial sector, which differ in their field of activity.

In the first chapter, based on critical and comparative analysis, the definitions in their evolution of competition, competitiveness and competition are derived and the types of competition are identified according to certain criteria. The competitiveness in its evolution and varieties have been studied and the respective conclusions have been made.

The opportunities for competitive advantage as predetermining competitiveness are analyzed and the three strategies for achieving competitive advantage are considered based on Michael Porter's concept of competitive advantage.

In the course of the logic of the exhibition the conceptual bases and significance of the innovation and the peculiarities of the innovation strategies are presented. An in-depth critical and comparative analysis of the leading theoretical formulations of the concept of innovation in its evolution is made and the consideration of innovation as an integral part of the process of implementing and improving new products or services is justified. market. A typology of innovations in their scope and areas of application has been typed.

The role of innovation strategies in providing competitive advantage is justified. An analysis of the trends in the implementation of innovation strategies in order to increase competitiveness in the European Union and Bulgaria. Based on the analysis, conclusions are summarized on the possibilities for measuring the competitiveness achieved through an effective innovation policy.

Based on the research, the first chapter presents in-depth conclusions.

The second chapter analyzes the applied innovation policies, respectively innovation strategies in different countries, regions and world organizations - such as the United States, Russia, China, the European Union and Bulgaria, based on the dissertation author's view that the innovation system of each state is built and developed under the influence of many objective and subjective factors such as size and scale of the country, location and resources, country policy in the field of innovation, level of entrepreneurial activity, development of organizational culture in the scope of innovation, level of research and development, vision for the future and degree of participation in the international division of labor and others.

The author thoroughly examines the national policy in the field of innovation in Bulgaria, emphasizing the strategic priorities in this direction and the appropriate tools for implementation. An analysis of the innovation activity in the country by economic sectors and the size of enterprises for the period 2014 - 2018

is made. The changes in the trends in this direction as a result of the pandemic related to COVID 19 are outlined.

As a result of the research conducted internationally and nationally and the conclusion that there is no unified methodology for research and evaluation, the author designs and proposes an algorithm for researching competitiveness by implementing innovative strategies.

The proposed algorithm includes four stages and aims to explore the main innovation strategies through which companies can improve and enhance their competitiveness. The idea of the author of the dissertation is, based on the obtained objective results to be able to derive specific opportunities for improving organizational competitiveness. The algorithm is based on the SWOT-analysis in order to identify potential strategic advantages for achieving organizational competitiveness in the surveyed enterprises and a survey, through a survey and a semi-standardized interview to study the competitiveness of the organization.

In-depth conclusions are summarized at the end of the second chapter.

The third chapter is aimed at studying the competitiveness of specific companies in the industrial sector, by implementing innovation strategies, based on the application of the algorithm proposed in the second chapter.

For each of the companies a SWOT-analysis was made in order to adequately choose an innovation strategy, oriented, according to the author of the work to maximize the strengths of the organization and the environment, while minimizing its weaknesses and external threats.

The results of a study are presented, through a survey and a semi-standardized interview, the purpose of which is to establish the relationship between the applied innovation strategies and the competitiveness of the surveyed enterprises.

The third chapter of the dissertation is a logical continuation of the first and second chapters as it verifies the main research thesis.

Based on the applied algorithm for research and analysis, at the end of the third chapter essential summaries are given about the adequate measures and tools that must be implemented to increase the competitiveness of the surveyed enterprises through innovative strategies, which empirically proves the direct link between increasing competitiveness and using appropriate innovation strategies.

In the conclusion of the dissertation the main conclusions, proposals and areas of application of the main scientific and applied research results are presented.

I support the view of the author of the dissertation that the development can be used by both researchers and current managers who are professionally engaged in achieving competitiveness, implementing innovative strategies in industry, and that the results of this work are applicable and in the field of training in innovation and competitiveness after relevant transformations and transformations.

The author has also outlined his views on his future research.

The content of the dissertation fully corresponds to its topic. The obtained results show that the set goals and research tasks have been fully achieved. The first chapter solves both theoretical and research tasks. The second chapter solves

the first and second practical tasks. The third chapter solves the third task of practical and applied nature. The research thesis is proven on the basis of empirical research and analysis.

The proposed dissertation is developed consistently and logically and is very well structured. The author shows a very good command of the terminology on the subject. He used well-chosen tools of research and analysis methods and a significant empirical database. In-depth studies and interpretation of the results have been made and scientifically substantiated proposals have been made for the opportunities for increasing the competitiveness of enterprises through an effective innovation policy and respectively innovation strategies.

The volume of the dissertation is optimal, from the point of view of completeness and completeness of the scientific research and from the point of view of the requirements of the dissertation for the award educational scientific degree "Doctor". I believe that the presented dissertation fully meets the requirements of Art. 27, paragraph 1 and paragraph 2 of the Regulations for application of the law for development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

The developed dissertation is a personal work of the author, because the research and scientific publications in the field of the considered issues are not mass. There is no suspicion of plagiarism.

The abstract is developed in a volume of 59 pages. The presented abstract reflects correctly the content of the dissertation, and includes the obligatory scientific and scientific-applied contributions and a list of scientific publications on the topic.

The author has presented 3 independent scientific publications related to the dissertation. All three have been published in scientific journals of SA "D. A. Tsenov ", Svishtov. Two of them are scientific articles and one is a scientific report presented at the scientific discussion on "Management - Reality and Future". All three scientific publications are in Bulgarian.

Pencho Malinov Malinov has participated in a number of scientific forums by presenting reports or as a listener, such as: scientific discussion on "Management - Reality and Future", 2017; and Doctoral research sessions held in 2018, 2019 and 2020.

Pencho Malinov Malinov meets the national minimum requirements for for the award educational scientific degree "Doctor" in Professional Direction 3.7. Administration and management with the achieved 30 points from scientific publications with a minimum required 30 points. The dissertation on the topic "Achieving competitiveness by implementing innovative strategies (following the example of companies in the industrial sector)" is a fully completed research paper and contains in-depth research on the problems.

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

The presented dissertation work has clearly expressed **scientific and applied scientific contributions.**

The following **scientific contributions** stand out as the most significant.

- A comparative and critical analysis of the theoretical statements related to the concepts of competitiveness, innovation policy and innovation strategies and the relationship and interdependence between them.
- An algorithm for research and analysis has been developed in order to measure competitiveness and opportunities for innovation and to draw up guidelines for development.

The following **scientific and applied contributions** stand out as the most significant.

- The trends, peculiarities and problems related to the opportunities for greater competitiveness and the role of innovation and adequate innovation strategies in this process at the macro level in different countries, regions and world organizations are analyzed.
- The macro framework of opportunities for greater competitiveness, based on innovation and appropriate innovation strategies in the country, has been studied.
- An empirical study was conducted, as a result of which the main practical problems related to achieving competitiveness were identified through the application of innovative strategies in enterprises in the industrial sector and science-based proposals were made with a practical application.

I accept the formulations formulated in this way as significant for science and practice.

The scientific and scientific-applied contributions in the works of the candidate can be referred to the following groups:

- Further development and enrichment of a current scientific problem related to the need to seek new opportunities and further develop existing ones to increase competitiveness by improving innovation policy and selecting and implementing appropriate innovation strategies;
- proving with new means of significant new aspects of already existing scientific problems, theories and methodological approaches;
- creation of new methods;
- contributions to implementation - methodologies, algorithms and models.

The present dissertation is a fully completed scientific work and contains in-depth research on the problems.

#### **IV. Critical notes, questions and recommendations on the dissertation.**

The dissertation fully meets the requirements for this type of scientific work. I have no critical remarks about him.

##### **Question:**

1. Is there a need for some adjustment in the proposed algorithm when applying it in other sectors - for example in the services sector?

As a recommendation and wish for the future research work of the author is to continue research, in the directions he outlined in the conclusion of the dissertation and publication of scientific results of the dissertation and future

research and scientific journals abroad. The issues on which Pencho Malinov is working are important not only for Bulgaria but also in the international aspect and the scientific and applied results of his research will be of interest to the scientific community abroad.

#### **V. Summary conclusion and opinion.**

The dissertation and the abstract of Pencho Malinov Malinov fully meet the requirements of the Law for Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation, the minimum national requirements for the award of an educational scientific degree "Doctor" in Professional Direction 3.7. Administration and management and the requirements for the award of an educational scientific degree "Doctor" under the Ph D program "Social Management" at the Business Academy "D. A. Tsenov ", Svishtov.

I give a positive assessment of the dissertation of Pencho Malinov Malinov on the topic "Achieving competitiveness by implementing innovative strategies (following the example of companies in the industrial sector)" and I suggest that the distinguished members of the scientific jury, Pencho Malinov Malinov be awarded an educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the Ph D program "Social Management".

23. 05. 2022  
Veliko Tarnovo

Reviewer: .....  
(Prof. D.S. Vanya Banabakova)