



REVIEW

on dissertation for obtaining a PhD degree in: Higher education area: 3. *Social, Economic and Legal sciences*, professional field 3.8 *Economics*, scientific specialty *Organization and management of production* (agriculture and sub-sectors)

Author of the dissertation: Meriton Naim Ismajli

PhD student (part-time) at the Department of Management and Marketing at the Agricultural University, Plovdiv

Thesis topic: MARKETING MANAGEMENT IN RURAL TOURISM IN KOSOVO

Reviewer: Prof. Dr. Stela Atanasova Todorova, AU - Plovdiv, Higher Education Area Social, Business and Legal Sciences; Professional field: Administration and Management, Economics

appointed as a member of the Scientific Jury with Order No. RD-16-265/5.03.2020 by the Rector of the Agricultural University.

1. Brief introduction of the applicant.

PhD student Meriton Ismajli was born on May 14, 1992 in Steim, Kosovo. He completed primary and secondary education in his hometown. He graduated in technology at ABB college and obtained a bachelor's and master's degree in "MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGIES" at AAB COLLEGE. He received a master's degree in public administration from "Haxhi Zeka" University. The doctoral student goes through various courses and trainings related to his specialty: Training: "Monitoring of the prosecutor's office in the municipalities" IDK

Pristina 2014; Training: "Leadership and management in school USPE & Shtime 19.4.2014 (certificate); Participant in the conference "Where will be the training of Shtime in 2018" organized by the Municipality of Shtime & QAPA.

As a result of the presented facts we can summarize that the doctoral student has dedicated his entire professional path to economic theory and practice related to the influence of the management of various institutions and instruments on rural development.

2. Relevance of the problem.

In recent years, rural areas in Kosovo have undergone significant socio-economic changes, and marketing related to rural tourism has had little effect on promoting their economic development. There is no marketing campaign to promote the development of rural tourism, which is a major source of income for many people living in rural areas. All these problems to which the development is dedicated make it extremely relevant and useful from a theoretical and practical point of view.

3. Purpose, tasks, hypotheses and methods of research.

The aim of this dissertation is to pose the problems and outline the trends in the development of rural tourism in the Republic of Kosovo. It is necessary to determine the level of investment in rural tourism in Kosovo, as well as the need for new ones in order to further develop and promote it. This main objective includes the following sub-objectives:

- creating new jobs and increasing employment in rural areas;
- supporting farmers in certain sectors in order to bring them closer to European rules, standards and practices;

- providing support for the development of tourism in Kosovo through the application of modern computer technology to advertise the natural wealth and heritage.
- achieving sustainable and inclusive growth through agricultural development;
- diversifying Kosovo's tourism product by promoting the development of cultural and historical tourism.

In order to achieve the above objectives, a number of tasks have been solved. The main research hypothesis of the dissertation is: Marketing influences the development of rural tourism in Kosovo.

In connection with the main hypothesis, four additional hypotheses have been formulated: promotion of natural beauties contributes to the development of rural tourism; investment in infrastructure affects the development of rural tourism; the lack of places for tourists, the low level of security and hygiene affect the development of rural tourism; the quality of hotel services affects the attraction of local and international tourists.

The research questions to which the doctoral student answers in the present study are closely related to the formulated hypotheses.

The toolkit used in the study includes autumn hypotheses and a specific questionnaire, which consists of two parts: the first part focuses on demographic data collection, and the second part consists of 10 specific questions, the latter being ranked and starting with questions from higher rank. Data analysis is performed through Google surveys.

In addition to the specific methods related to them, a number of other more general methods are used to prove the conceptual thesis and the formulated hypotheses: systematic analysis; comparative analysis; graphical analysis; statistical methods. All data is collected through Google Polls, and processed and analyzed through the specialized software product SPSS.

4. Visualization and presentation of the results obtained.

The dissertation is presented in an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion and appendices on 205 pages. The study is illustrated with 27 tables, 19 figures and 30 photos.

The dissertation presentation has a scientific style. 151 literature sources are included in the used literature.

5. Discussion of the results and the literature used.

The dissertation is developed using: 151 scientific publications and works of authors; newsletters of international organizations; reports and bulletins of ministries and municipalities of the Republic of Kosovo, as well as a number of normative acts and decisions of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Kosovo.

Empirical information about the study is also provided by sample surveys and in-depth interviews with the help of questionnaires prepared by the author.

The introduction of the doctoral dissertation presents the topicality of the topic, the object and the subject of research, the purpose and tasks, the research hypotheses. The methodological approach and the structure of the work are presented.

The first chapter of the dissertation makes a critical review of the theoretical and methodological foundations of marketing management. The PhD student discusses the role and importance of marketing, the basic concepts, approaches and stages related to marketing management, the specifics of rural tourism as an object of marketing management, analyzes rural tourism in Kosovo and tourism organizations in rural areas of Kosovo. The end of the first chapter ends with the development of the methodological approach of the forthcoming research.

From the presentation made in the first chapter it is evident the good knowledge of the managerial aspects of marketing by the doctoral student.

The second chapter of the dissertation research describes the research methodology including the objectives of the research, the sample object of study, its description, the procedure used for its definition and data collection, as well as the findings related to the purpose of the first research. The areas with potential for rural tourism development in Kosovo are also identified here.

Chapter Three, entitled "Analysis of Marketing Activities in Tourism Organizations in Kosovo", analyzes the development of rural areas in Kosovo and the measures applied to them. Against this background, the trends in the development of rural tourism in Kosovo, the existing tourism organizations in the sector, as well as the marketing management in them, strategic management and trained in a tourist destination are traced. Verification of the developed statistical hypotheses is made, thus looking for proof of the validity of the research thesis. In this chapter the main conclusions related to the research and the corresponding recommendations to the marketing of the tourist business in the rural areas are made.

The conclusion of the dissertation summarizes the main conclusions from the results obtained in the study and provides valuable recommendations for solving many of the emerging problems for the development of rural tourism in Kosovo. A valuable recommendation is given to municipalities in rural areas of Kosovo to develop a joint strategy for rural tourism development.

The general assessment I make of the dissertation is as follows: the literature used by the doctoral student corresponds to the research, the authors are cited accurately and correctly, the goals and objectives set in the dissertation are completely solved. The style is scientific and understandable. The layout and illustration of the obtained results is very good.

6. Contributions to the thesis.

In the dissertation the following contribution moments of scientific and scientifically-applied character can be distinguished:

1. The basic concepts and processes related to the management and application of the marketing approach in the field of rural tourism are clarified;
2. As a result of the conducted research the main risk factors that the companies face when developing the tourist business in the rural areas have been identified, indicated and analyzed.
3. The costs and benefits of rural tourism development for the socio-economic development of rural areas are indicated and analyzed.
4. A strategic framework for rural tourism management in the Republic of Kosovo has been developed.

7. Critical notes and questions.

The work of the doctoral student is a completed scientific and applied research, due to which I have no critical remarks. I have a recommendation for the doctoral student after the defense of the dissertation to continue and expand his work, aimed at studying the role of tourism in rural development.

8. Published articles and citations.

The doctoral student has a total of 5 publications, 3 of which are independent. They are the following:

1. Meriton, I., J. Fejza. Motivation and its impact on an organization. Knowledge International Journal. Vol. 28.5, 14 December 2018, p.p. 1571-1574
2. Meriton, I., J. Fejza. Methods of recruitment in the chain of stories. Knowledge International Journal. Vol. 28.5, 14 December 2018, p.p. 1581-1584
3. Meriton, I. Motivation in rural tourism. Knowledge International Journal. Vol. 31.5, 5 June, 2019, p.p. 1641-1644
4. Meriton, I. Touristic propaganda in rural tourism. Knowledge International Journal. Vol. 31.5, 5 June, 2019, p.p. 1645-1648
5. Meriton, I. Touristic propaganda in rural tourism. Knowledge International Journal. Vol. 31.5, 24 December, 2019, p.p. 207-212

The abstract presented objectively reflects the structure and content of the dissertation.

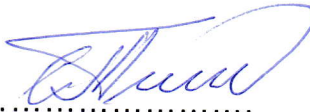
CONCLUSION:

On the basis of the various methods of research, the correctly performed experiments, the summaries and the conclusions made, the dissertation submitted meets the requirements of the ZRASRB and the Regulations of the Agrarian University for its application, which gives me a reason to evaluate it. **POSITIVE .**

I allow myself to offer the venerable Scientific Jury also to vote in the affirmative and to award to Meriton Naim Ismajli the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty "Organization and Management of Production".

Date: 7.07.2020

Plovdiv

Reviewer: 

(Prof. Dr. S. Todorova)