



SCIENTIFIC OPINION

On dissertation for obtain the Educational and Scientific Degree 'Doctor' in Higher Education: 3. Social, Business and Legal Sciences, Professional Field: 3.8 Economics, Scientific Specialty: "Organization and management" (agriculture and sub-sectors).

Author of the dissertation: Vladan Cogoljevic

Part-time PhD student at the Department of Management and Marketing at the Agricultural University, Plovdiv.

Doctoral thesis topic: THE IMPACT OF PERSONAL SELLING STRATEGY ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF SERBIAN AGRICULTURE AND FOOD INDUSTRY.

Reviewer: Assoc. Prof. Snezhinka Konstantinova Stoyanova, PhD, University of Food Technologies – Plovdiv, 3. Social, Business and Legal Sciences, Professional Field: 3.8 Economics, Scientific Specialty: 'Economics and Management', appointed as a member of the Scientific Jury by order No. RD-16-462 / 11.06.2020 from the Rector of the Agricultural University, Plovdiv.

1. Relevance of the problem.

Unprecedented exploitation of natural resources can lead to their depletion. European countries are facing significant and potentially irreversible changes, such as food security, scarcity of natural resources, dependence on fossil fuels and climate change. The situation is getting worse by fact that by 2050 the world's population will grow by more than 9 billion, and food demand by type of goods in 2050 and consumption growth will jump by 40% in billion kg / year, compared to before the crisis of 2007.

Overcoming these complex and interlinked challenges requires new research and innovation, to achieve rapid and sustainable change in lifestyles which affecting all levels of society and the economy. Prosperity and well-being depend on it how the necessary transformations will be performed.

The wide-ranging nature of the problem provides a unique opportunity to fully address the challenges and achieve sustainable economic growth.

In this sense, the choice of topic of the dissertation research is in response to global trends regarding the importance of personal sales for development of agriculture and food industry in Serbia.

The topic is relevant, well defined and of great practical importance for business.

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

The purpose, tasks and methods of the dissertation research are presented in a logical connection and sequence.

Within the doctoral dissertation the scientific goal of the research is to systematize the economic knowledge in agriculture and food industry of Serbia and to establish models of impact of personal sales of business entities on the development of agribusiness in Serbia: (1) An analysis is made of two economic hierarchical levels – national macroeconomic and strategic level of the business entity; (2) The problems of the agricultural economy and the food industry in Serbia are derived from the national macroeconomic level; (3) Sales strategies and marketing mix are studied, as well as the modern understanding of the use of personal sales as part of integrated marketing communications and their impact on the development of agribusiness in Serbia.

The main hypothesis (Ho) of the dissertation research is that the personal sales strategy is an important marketing strategy that has a constant impact on the development of agribusiness in Serbia, which also affects transformations in following areas, such as: increasing the growth of sales of agricultural and food products, increasing innovation activity and business efficiency.

In parallel, six special hypotheses have been formulated – (H1-H6), which can be summarized by allegations that: there is a lack of effective strategies for personal sales; their application in Serbia's agribusiness could lead to increased economic activity; digitalisation does not affect the personal sales of Serbian agribusiness companies; the personal sales strategy determines the communication channels with the target groups; the organizational structure of the sales of Serbian companies for agriculture and food industry does not have a significant impact on changing the personal sales strategy; the sales process requires companies to have in-depth knowledge of sales skills and techniques.

Several different research methods have been used to support the realization of the research thesis, namely: the method of theoretical benchmarking research, empirical research methods, methods of mathematical statistics and the historical method. Methods of analysis, comparative analysis and synthesis are applied to discuss and compare the subject of research, to identify its characteristics and to compare historical data. The descriptive method is used to present the results of research. The method of analogy is used to prove hypotheses, draw conclusions and discuss the results.

3. Visualization and presentation of the results obtained.

PhD thesis is in a volume of 171 pages and consists of a title page, introduction, four chapters, conclusion, references and applications.

The results of the dissertation research are reflected in 20 tables, 13 figures, 55 graphs and 2 appendices.

4. Discussion of the results and the references.

The bibliographic reference includes 96 sources in Serbian and English.

5. Contributions to the Dissertation

I accept reference for the scientific contributions and applied scientific contributions of the dissertation:

Scientific Contributions

1. The essence of personal sales strategies as an element for sustainable development of agribusiness is clarified.
2. A conceptual framework has been developed to assess the impact of personal sales strategies on the development of Serbian agriculture and food industry.
3. Analysis and assessment of the impact of personal sales strategies in agriculture and the food industry in the Republic of Serbia.

Scientific and Applied Contributions

1. Recommendations are made to improve the implementation of personal sales strategies in agribusiness

6. Critical notes and questions.

My critical remarks are regarding the methodology and the technically designed dissertation:

1. Using different research periods in the dissertation.
2. Mixing texts in Serbian and English in tables and figures.
3. No literary sources in Bulgarian.

7. Published articles and citations.

Seven publications are presented – 1 individual and 6 co-authored, for the period 2017-2019, which meet the minimum scientometric indicators.

Presented abstract objectively reflects the structure and content of the dissertation.

CONCLUSION:

In support of the above, I consider that Vladan Cogoljevic has developed his doctoral thesis at the required scientific level. Various research analyses have been adopted and applied.

Based on the dissertation research and its scientific contributions, I think that the dissertation work meets the requirements of the Application of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria, and the Rules of the Agricultural University for its application, which gives me a reason to rate it **POSITIVE**.

I allow myself to propose to the venerable Scientific Jury also to vote and to awards to Vladan Cogoljevic the Educational and Scientific Degree '**Doctor**' in the Scientific Specialty: "Organization and management" (agriculture and sub-sectors).

Data: 17.07.2020
Plovdiv

SCIENTIFIC OPINION BY:

(Assoc. Prof. Sn. Konstantinova, PhD)