



SCIENTIFIC OPINION

of a dissertation for acquisition of educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in:
3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences; Professional Field 3.8 Economics;
Scientific Specialty: Organization and Management of Production

Author of the dissertation: VLADAN COGOLJEVIC

Independent PhD student at the Department of Management and Marketing at the Agricultural University, Plovdiv.

Topic of Dissertation: THE IMPACT OF PERSONAL SELLING STRATEGY ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF SERBIAN AGRICULTURE AND FOOD INDUSTRY

Author of the Scientific Statement: Professor Milena Ivanova Tepavicharova PhD, Higher School of Security and Economics - Plovdiv, 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences; Professional Field: 3.7 Administration and Management. Scientific Specialty: "Organization and Management of Production", appointed a member of the scientific jury by order No RD-16-462/ 11.06.2020 by the Rector of the Agrarian University.

1. Brief introduction of the candidate.

Vladan Cogoljevic was born on March 9, 1983. In 2009 he graduated with a bachelor's degree in economics, and two years later (2011) he obtained a second bachelor's degree at the Faculty of Business Economics and Entrepreneurship at the Nikola Tesla University. He completed his master's degree in 2013 at the Faculty of Business Economics and Entrepreneurship, defending his master's thesis on "Stock Exchange, Organization and Tools". In 2016, he started work as Assistant Director of Marketing and Information Technology at the Faculty of Business Economics and Entrepreneurship in Belgrade. In 2018 he was enrolled as a doctoral student in the Department of Management and Marketing, Faculty of Economics, at the Agricultural University of Plovdiv. He speaks English, German and Croatian.

2. Relevance of the problem

The dissertation deals with issues related to the strategic aspects of personal sales in agriculture and the food industry in the Republic of Serbia. The relevance of the study is determined by the assumption that the strategy of personal selling influences the development of agriculture and the food industry. The author also considers the main factors which generate growth in demand for agricultural and food products. These are population growth and average

income growth. Therefore, food production and marketing are of paramount importance, and hence the development of agriculture and the food industry are becoming a significant factor in solving the food problem.

3. Purpose, tasks, hypotheses and research methods.

The aim of the dissertation is clearly formulated and is focused mainly on the systematization of economic knowledge and the creation of models of the impact of the personal sales of the economic entities in agriculture and food industry of Serbia. The goal is achieved through solving several clearly defined tasks which are actually feasible.

The PhD student formulated a general hypothesis (H_0) of the scientific research, which demonstrates that the personal sales strategy is a marketing strategy which has a dominant influence on the development of agriculture and the food industry in Serbia. This is reflected in the strengthening of the economic activities, especially in the increase of sales of agricultural and food products, the rise in innovation in the sector and the sophistication of business efficiency. In addition to the main hypothesis, the doctoral student formulated six special hypotheses, studied and analyzed in the paper.

Appropriate methods of analysis were used in the study, which were correctly selected and applied. The method of theoretical research, empirical research methods, the methods of mathematical statistics, logical methods and reasoning, etc. supported the study of the problems. Various sources of information were selected for the needs of the thesis: monographs, scientific and specialized publications, statistical reports and bulletins, internet sources and others.

4. Visualization and presentation of the obtained results

In the dissertation work various means are used to illustrate and summarize the obtained results through figures, tables and diagrams, which lead to correctly systematizing and objectively presenting the results.

5. Discussion of the results and literature sources used.

The presented dissertation examines a large part of the modern specialized scientific literature in connection with the theory of the role and importance of the personal sales and marketing for the development of agriculture and food industry in Serbia. The offered methodological approach for assessing the impact of the personal sales on the development of agriculture and the food industry has allowed identifying and evaluating a number of marketing strategic decisions and approaches affecting the volume and structure of food production. The dissertation contains concrete results and empirical evidence which objectively reflect the real achievements of the research. Recommendations of practical significance have also been made.

The literature pool used includes 96 literary titles in Serbian and English. The results of the empirical research are illustrated in 20 tables, 13 figures, 55 schemes and 2 appendices.

6. Contributions of the dissertation

In the dissertation "The Impact of Personal Selling Strategy on the Development of Serbian Agriculture and Food Industry" the following scientific and scientifically-applicable contributions can be distinguished;

Scientific contributions

- On the basis of comparative and critical analysis of modern theoretical formulations and practices, the peculiarities are revealed and the essence of personal sales strategies as an element for sustainable development of agriculture, and partly of the food industry, is clarified.
- A methodological approach and conceptual framework for assessing the impact of personal sales strategies on the development of Serbian agriculture and food sector are offered.
- An analysis and assessment of the impact of personal sales strategies in agriculture and the food sector in the Republic of Serbia is made.

Scientifically applicable contributions

- Specific recommendations are proposed to improve the implementation of personal sales strategies in Serbia's agriculture and food sector.

7. Critical remarks and questions

Regarding the dissertation, I have no significant critical remarks. I can only point out some inaccuracies with regard to the following:

- The literature sources review is extensive enough, but not very well analyzed and illustrated in the theoretical part.
- It is recommendable for each chapter to end with conclusions. This would help systematize the final part and facilitate the perception of the general conclusions drawn in the dissertation.
- I recommend conducting a comparative study related to the impact of the personal sales strategy on the development of agribusiness within several countries in the Balkan region. In this way, the doctoral student will broaden his scientific activity.

8. Articles and citations published.

Vladan Cogoljevic has published seven articles under the topic of his dissertation. Through the scientific publications presented, the doctoral student meets the minimum scientometric indicators (30.83) for the acquisition of educational and scientific degree Doctor, specified in Art. 2A of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

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

CONCLUSION:

The dissertation "The Impact of Personal Selling Strategy on the Development of Serbian Agriculture and Food Industry" by **Vladan Cogoljevic** is an in-depth and independent study which reveals the author's literary awareness and practical experience on the issues, also, methodological training and analytical skills of a researcher. The obtained and published scientifically-applicable results are indisputably up-to-date and are of interest for the scientific and public practice.

Based on the above-stated in the present dissertation evaluation, I believe that the requirements of the Act for the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, The Regulations for the Application of ADASRB and the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the Agricultural University - Plovdiv regarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" are met.

As a member of the scientific jury, I grant with full conviction a **POSITIVE assessment** of the dissertation "The Impact of Personal Selling Strategy on the Development of Serbian Agriculture and Food Industry", proposing to the scientific jury to award **Vladan Cogoljevic** educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in area of higher education 3. "Social, Economic and Legal Sciences", professional field 3.8 „Economics", scientific specialty "Organization and Management of Production".

16.07.2020 г.
Plovdiv

Evaluator::
/ Prof. Milena Tepavicharova, PhD /