



REVIEW

on dissertation for obtaining the **DOCTORATE DEGREE** in Higher Education 3.
Social, business and legal sciences, Professional Field 3.8 Economics, Scientific
Specialty: Organization and management of production

Author of the dissertation: VLADAN COGOLJEVIC

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Thesis topic:

**THE IMPACT OF PERSONAL SELLING STRATEGY ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF
SERBIAN AGRICULTURE AND FOOD INDUSTRY**

Reviewer: Prof. Dr. Nelly Andreeva Bencheva,

Agricultural University, Plovdiv; 3. Social, Business and Legal sciences, Professional
field 3.7 Administration and management, Scientific specialty: Organization and
management appointed as a member of the scientific council by order № РД-16-
462/11.06.2020 from the Rector of the AU.

1. Brief introduction of the applicant.

Vladan Cogoljevic is a Serbian citizen, born on March 9, 1983. He completed two
bachelor's programs. In 2009 he graduated with a bachelor's degree in economics
(180 credits) at the Faculty of Business Economics and Entrepreneurship. The
second bachelor's degree (240 credits) was completed in 2011. Faculty of Business
Economics and Entrepreneurship, at the University - Nikola Tesla.

Vladan Cogoljevic has a master's degree in economics (300 credits) from the Faculty
of Business Economics and Entrepreneurship. The topic of the master's thesis is
"Stock Exchange, organization and tools". In 2018 he is a doctoral student in the
Department of Management and Marketing, at the Faculty of Economics, at the
Agricultural University of Plovdiv.

Currently, Cogoljevic holds the position of Assistant Director for Marketing and
Information Technology at the Faculty of Business Economics and Entrepreneurship
At level C1 he speaks English and Croatian, and at level B1 German.

2. The relevance of the topic under the consideration

The relevance of this dissertation is justified by the forecasts for the annual growth of world consumption of agricultural and food products until 2050, which show that it may be about 1.1%. The main factors that generate growth in demand for agricultural and food products are population growth as well as average income growth, especially in developing countries. In such a situation, the issue of food production and marketing becomes paramount. The development of agriculture and the food industry are becoming a significant factor in solving the continuing problem. Therefore, the study of demand and sale of food has a definite impact on the development of agriculture and the food industry.

In the Republic of Serbia, the study of this impact is important, as more than 630,000 agricultural households are involved in the sale of agricultural products, and almost 4,000 companies work in the food industry, employing over 70,000 people.

In this context, the dissertation clarifies some issues related to agriculture and the food industry in the Republic of Serbia from the strategic aspect of personal sales. In this sense, the relevance of the study is determined by the assumption that the strategy of personal selling influences the improvement of the development of agriculture and food industry of the Republic of Serbia.

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

The purpose, tasks and methods of the research are presented logically and consistently. The scientific goal of the study is mainly focused on the systematization of economic knowledge in agriculture and the food industry of Serbia and the creation of models of the impact of personal sales of economic entities in agriculture and the food industry of Serbia for its development.

To achieve the goal of the study, several research tasks have been solved, which include the main determination, from an economic point of view, of the place, role, scope and importance of agriculture and the food industry in the Serbian economy; defining, from a strategic point of view, the personal sale of legal entities from the agricultural and food industry of Serbia; theoretical and practical justification of the impact (quantitative and qualitative) of the personal sales strategy to improve the development of agriculture and the food industry of Serbia; a study of the impact of Serbia's agriculture and food industry on the development of the Serbian economy.

A clear general hypothesis (H0) of the research has been formulated, namely that the personal sales strategy is a marketing strategy that has a dominant influence on the development of agriculture and the food industry of Serbia, which is reflected in the strengthening of economic activities, especially in increasing sales of agricultural and food products, increasing innovation in the sector, improving business efficiency.

Six special hypotheses have also been formulated, namely:

H1: The main challenge for Serbia's current agricultural and food businesses is the lack of effective and penetrating personal sales strategies.

H2: Implementing personal strategies for selling to a company, in the agriculture and food sector of Serbia can lead to increased economic activities.

H3: Digital technologies do not significantly change the strategy of personal sales of Serbian agriculture and food companies.

H4: A personal sales strategy determines how companies should communicate with their target customers.

H5: The organizational structure of the sales function of Serbian agriculture and food companies does not significantly affect the change of personal sales strategy.

H6: The sales process is becoming more complex and requires companies to have in-depth knowledge of sales skills and techniques.

he used methods allow to make a complete characteristic of the obtained results and represent a basis for their correct interpretation. The following main methods are applied: the method of theoretical research based on literature sources, empirical research methods based on field research; the methods of mathematical statistics used to design and process the results of empirical research; logical reasoning methods, which include implications, inductive and deductive reasoning used to compare research, define research functions, identify functional relationships and the impact of personal sales, and marketing strategy for the development of Serbian agriculture and food industry.

The information base of the research includes scientific sources (monographs, scientific and specialized publications; Internet sources, including relevant data from

reports and studies of various expert government agencies), national sources - statistical reports and bulletins of relevant ministries, institutes, national agencies, etc.

4. Visualization and presentation of the results obtained

The dissertation is developed in a volume of 172 pages. The structure of the dissertation is built according to the goals and objectives of the study. Regarding the structure and content of the dissertation, we should point out that a good and logical presentation of the material has been achieved. The paper is structured in eight sections: introduction, four sections, conclusion, list of references and appendices. 96 literary titles in Serbian and English were used. The results of the empirical research are illustrated on 20 tables, 13 figures, 55 schemes, 2 appendices.

5. Discussion of the results and the references

In the presented dissertation important theoretical summaries, decisions and conclusions about the role and importance of personal sales and marketing for the development of agriculture and food industry of Serbia are made. The developed methodological approach for assessing the impact of personal sales on the development of agriculture and the food industry has allowed to identify and evaluate a number of marketing strategic decisions and approaches affecting the volume and structure of food production.

In the second part of the dissertation a thorough review of the economy of agriculture and the food industry in the world is made. The focus then shifts to the agricultural economy and the food industry in Serbia. The historical development of agriculture and the food industry in Serbia is examined critically from a legal, strategic and institutional point of view.

In the third part, within the chapter Sales Strategies and Marketing Mix of Companies, the focus of the research is on marketing. In this regard, the peculiarities of trade strategies are revealed. Within the marketing mix the peculiarities of the system for marketing communication and the strategies for sales of the economic entities from the studied sectors are indicated. The results of the study allowed to indicate specific future marketing activities of the business units of the studied sectors and the concentration of sales efforts.

In the fourth part, in the process of analysis it is established that from different aspects of personal sales of businesses need to build specific ways to communicate with target customers, as well as modern ways of communication such as digital marketing, including ways to promote personal sales. .

An extensive empirical study was conducted, covering a sample of 72 producers in the field of agriculture and food industry of the Republic of Serbia. The empirical research covers a total of 3 significant research areas (sample, marketing profile and strategic profile of producers), within which 26 indicators with a total of 197 variables were analyzed.

Based on empirical studies of the impact of personal sales strategy on the development of agriculture and food industry in the Moravica region of the Republic of Serbia, an impact model has been developed to establish the relationship between personal sales strategy, on the one hand, and the development of agriculture and the food industry of Serbia, on the other hand.

An in-depth analysis of the impact of the results of the empirical study was made and it was found that there are areas in which manufacturers could significantly improve their business from marketing and strategic positions.

Possible improvements in terms of marketing profile are the following: application of modern information technology in marketing; control of food quality and safety, creation of the ideal user profile, performance of SWOT analysis of the business entity, application of digital marketing as an effective strategy for entering new markets.

We can summarize that the dissertation contains specific results and empirical evidence that objectively reflects the real achievements of the research. The obtained results are correctly interpreted. After each section of the dissertation, precise and clear conclusions are made, which result from the research.

The achieved results unequivocally show that the doctoral student has the necessary training and ability to conduct independent research. Recommendations of practical significance have also been made.

6. Contributions to the dissertation.

The content of the dissertation and the results of the research give grounds to highlight the following scientific and scientific-applied contributions:

Scientific contributions

1. 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.

2. A methodological approach and a conceptual framework for assessing the impact of personal sales strategies on the development of Serbian agriculture and food sector have been developed.

3. An analysis and assessment of the impact of personal sales strategies in agriculture and the food sector in the Republic of Serbia has been made.

Scientific and applied contributions

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

7. Critical notes and subject matters.

Some weaknesses and inaccuracies are admitted in the dissertation, namely:

- In the introduction, the connection between the strategy of personal sales and their impact on the development of agriculture and the food sector of Serbia needs to be revealed with more precision and argumentation.

- Some of the hypotheses that are applied in the research process need more specification.

- Technical inaccuracies are allowed in determining the tables and figures.

I hope that these notes, which do not reduce the value of the dissertation, will be taken into account by the doctoral student in his future research work.

8. Published articles and citations.

Vladan Tsogolevich has published seven articles on the topic of his dissertation. Through the scientific publications presented in this way, the doctoral student meets the minimum scientometric indicators (30.83) for the acquisition of ONS "Doctor", specified in Art. 2A of ZRASRB.

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

CONCLUSION:

Based on the different research methods learned and applied by the doctoral student, the summaries and conclusions made, I believe that the presented

dissertation meets the requirements of ZRASRB and the Regulations of the Agricultural University for its application, which gives me reason to evaluate it **POSITIVE**.

I allow myself to propose to the esteemed Scientific Jury also to vote positively and to award **Vladan Cogoljevic** the educational and **scientific degree "Doctor"** in the scientific specialty "Organization and Management of Production".

Date: 10.07. 2020

Plovdiv

REVIEWER:

(Prof. Dr. Nelly Bencheva)