



## REVIEW

on the dissertation work for obtaining the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in: field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional strand 3.8 Economy, scientific specialty: Organization and management (agriculture and subsectors)

**Author of the dissertation work:** KUSHTRIM EMRUSH KAMILI,  
PhD student of independent training at the Department of "Management and Marketing" at the Agricultural University, Plovdiv

**Theme of the dissertation work:** „INCREASING THE EFFICIENCY OF THE SALES MANAGEMENT OF AGRICULTURAL ENTERPRISES IN ALBANIA”

**Reviewer:** Prof. Dr. VALENTINA LYUBENOVA NIKOLOVA-ALEXIEVA, University of Food Technologies - Plovdiv, higher education field: 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional direction: 3.8 Economy, scientific specialty: "Economics and Management", appointed as a member of the scientific jury by order No RD-16-985/07.10.2022 by Rector of Agricultural University-Plovdiv.

### 1. Short presentation of the candidate.

Kushtrim Emrush Kamili has been enrolled as a doctoral student of independent training in a doctoral program at the Department of "Management and Marketing" of the Agrarian University in the scientific specialty: Organization and Management (agriculture and subsectors) in the period from 2020 - 2022. He obtained a bachelor's degree in Economics in 2008 at the University of Pristina, Kosovo and a master's degree in Economics at the University of Tetovo, North Macedonia in 2017. His academic career began in 2008 as a lecturer in economics at the Agrarian Higher School in Gilian, Kosovo. His teaching portfolio is impressive - in the period 2008 - 2016, he gained solid experience as an economics teacher at the Agrarian Higher School, High School and the Higher School of Arts in Gilian, Kosovo. From 2016 to the present, he has been appointed as an assistant professor of finance at the International University of Novi Pazar, branch in Presovo, Serbia. He is fluent in English, Serbian and Turkish, and has acquired very good computer and digital skills.

*Therefore, the doctoral candidate has an excellent basis for in-depth scientific research work in the field of marketing, management and good practices for increasing the sales efficiency of agrarian enterprises.*

## **2. Topicality of the problem.**

In terms of content, the dissertation deals with an extremely topical economic problem related to the study of accumulated local and foreign experience in the field of customer payments, as well as the creation of mathematical models and methods, and their adaptation to the specific realities prevailing in Albania at the moment. In the conditions of an economy in transition, enterprises are faced with the previously absent problem of the occurrence of bad debts, which are direct losses and reduce the profit of enterprises from production activity. The sharp acceleration of inflationary processes slows down the receipt of payments from buyers, which also leads to financial losses for enterprises. The reform years were characterized by a crisis of non-payments (payments were made through barter and bills of exchange), which affected enterprises from almost all sectors, including the agricultural sector. Applying adequate strategies for managing the sales performance of agrarian enterprises in Albania creates opportunities for financial recovery, improving their positioning and image, and forming new target market segments, as well as additional opportunities for creating competitive advantages and sustainable development. All of the above reinforces the significance of the dissertation work. Insufficient research in the field of marketing and effective sales management and the lack of a clear methodology for planning conditions for the sale of agricultural products, gives rise to the need for scientific work with a similar focus.

It is for the above reasons that I claim that the topic of the dissertation has been successfully chosen. *It is extremely up-to-date, very original and has great practical significance.*

## **3. Purpose, tasks, hypotheses and methods of examination.**

In the introduction of the dissertation, the main goal and six logically related tasks for its achievement are formulated. The object and subject of the research are correctly defined.

When interpreting the data, the doctoral student is based on scientific publications and works of Bulgarian and foreign authors; information bulletins of international organizations; reports and newsletters of thematic materials from periodicals, as well as materials obtained in the process of the author's practical work in agricultural enterprises in Albania. In the course of the research, data from the financial reports of agricultural enterprises (OJSC Likinskaya Manufaktura, CJSC Tirotext, CJSC Tirana Weaving and Finish Plant, OJSC Agricultural Firm) were used.

Different mathematical methods (linear programming, simulation) are used to solve the tasks. The optimization and simulation calculations, as well as the processing of the results, were carried out using specially developed programs in the algorithmic programming language Visual Basic for Applications (VBA) of the Microsoft Excel software package. *The methodological toolkit is appropriately selected, in accordance with the set goals and objectives.*

*Both the objective and the tasks are clearly stated and properly formulated, providing ample opportunities for conclusions and recommendations in the research and conclusion. I give a very high assessment of the methodology used, as well as regarding the fulfillment of the tasks set to achieve the goal of the dissertation.*



#### 4. Visuality and presentation of the results obtained.

The presented dissertation is **126 pages** long. Structurally, it includes an introduction, 3 chapters, and a conclusion. The results were obtained using modern instrumentation and are illustrated with appropriately selected **3 figures** and **22 tables**, which is proof of the doctoral student's qualities as a very good researcher.

After the main text and the conclusion, **9 appendices** have been added:

**Appendix 1.** Average Receivables Turnover Period in US Agricultural Industry Subsectors (1999) (excerpt)

**Appendix 2.** The share of the agricultural industry in the total volume of debt in the industry of Albania

**Appendix 3.** The source code of the program module of the linear programming model.

**Appendix 4.** Data table for the surveyed companies

**Appendix 5.** The source code of the simulation model software module

**Appendix 6.** Output data of the simulation model

**Appendix 7.** Results of 30 runs of the simulation model

**Appendix 8.** Source code of the program module that performs the probability distribution of payment amounts based on the results of the simulation model

**Appendix 9.** Probability distribution of payment amounts.

*The introduction* presents the selected research problem, the topicality of the topic is justified, the main goal and tasks are correctly formulated. The object and subject of the research are specified, a brief overview of the state of the problem in international and national theoretical sources is made, the research tools and information sources are described.

**Chapter one** is entitled "New phenomena in the commercial activity of agricultural enterprises in Albania during the transition to a market economy" and is developed in a volume of **26 pages**. It is focused on the analysis of the changes that occurred in the sales activity of agricultural enterprises in Albania during the transition to a market economy. It is concluded that currently local agricultural enterprises are forced to pay much more attention to sales activities, since the wholesale system is not sufficiently developed. Different forms of non-cash payments are examined and classified, and the scale of their application in the Albanian economy in general and in the agricultural industry in particular is assessed. The features of the manifestation of the crisis of non-payments in the agricultural sector have been analyzed.

*A significant contribution of the doctoral student* in this chapter is the identification of the determinants of sales efficiency and its management, as well as the development of a methodological framework for the analysis and evaluation of cash and barter flows for the sale of the production of agricultural enterprises in a transition economy.

The doctoral student's excellent familiarity with the theory of business modeling, the influence of the methods of supplying the enterprise with resources on the specifics of its marketing activity and the payment process, as well as the handling of a broad conceptual apparatus, make a very good impression.

**Chapter two** is entitled "Management of the planning process of the sale of products in the agrarian enterprise", developed in a volume of **25 pages**. Structurally, it is made up of three logically linked paragraphs. The first paragraph examines the process of payment with buyers of products, its place in the commercial policy of the enterprise and the relationship with other elements of sales. In the second paragraph, the extent of the use of trade credit in the sale of agricultural products is analyzed and it is concluded that the share



of trade credit increased significantly during the transition from a planned to a market economy in Albania. In the third paragraph, based on researched developments of local and foreign scientists on this problem, it is concluded that Albania lacks adequate methods and mathematical models that allow enterprises to plan the process of receiving payments from buyers, and Western methods are inapplicable in Albanian conditions.

A *significant contribution* in this chapter is that, on the basis of the examined theoretical and methodological statements, a methodology is proposed that allows effective management of cash and barter flows for the sale of products in the context of the spread of barter in populated areas and the development of an adequate credit policy for agricultural enterprises.

**Chapter three** is entitled "Using Mathematical Models for Planning Conditions for the Sale of Agricultural Products", developed in a volume **of 30 pages**. In this chapter, mathematical models are proposed that allow formalization of the decision-making process regarding credit and discount policy. A mathematical model for choosing the optimal option for the delivery of products to various consumers is proposed, which, using the method of linear programming, allows to maximize cash and barter flows for the sale of products.

A methodological approach is also proposed that compares cash and barter revenues, reducing barter transactions to cash, which allows taking into account the additional costs arising from the use of barter transactions.

A *significant contribution* of the PhD student in this chapter is the proposed simulation model of cash and barter flows for product sales, which allows the use of simulation methods to estimate the most likely volume of incoming cash and other resources for products shipped to customers.

At the end of the third chapter, the main arguments are systematized, which prove the formulated goal and the related tasks.

**The conclusion** of the dissertation summarizes the conclusions and findings of the results of the conducted research. They provide grounds for establishing that the main goal and objectives have been achieved.

*The structure of the dissertation research is logically built and corresponds to the set goal and tasks. The work contains specific results and empirical evidence that objectively reflect the real achievements of the conducted scientific research.*

## **5. Discussion of results and literature used.**

### **➤ In the theoretical part of the dissertation research:**

The dissertation was developed on the basis of an in-depth study of a large volume of theoretical and practical research. In the list of literary sources used, a total of 114 sources are indicated, all in English. The indicated literary sources are up-to-date and directly related to the topic of the dissertation work. The doctoral student has carried out a serious literature review and made a synthesis of theoretical foundations of the marketing activity of agrarian enterprises during the transition to a market economy. An assessment of the scale of implementation of non-monetary payments in the industry of Albania was carried out and different types of non-monetary payments were analyzed in terms of their profitability for the enterprise. An assessment of the scale of commercial lending in the Albanian agricultural industry has been carried out and the scientific works of local and foreign scholars in the field of customer payment process management have been analysed. The systematizations and summaries made show thoroughness and conscientious work with literary sources, skills in applying analytical and deductive



techniques for processing a significant amount of information with various research methods. Correctly, all citations and comments of the author are displayed in parentheses in the text, which makes it easier to refer to the cited sources. The author's participation in the discussions on the researched problems is active and reflects skills to express one's own critical thinking and to formulate new conclusions and findings.

➤ **In the methodological part of the dissertation research:**

The PhD student has chosen an appropriate methodology and research toolkit that matches the complex, multidimensional nature of the study. To achieve the main goal and set tasks, a grouping method was used (authors' opinions, methodological characteristics, influencing factors, companies); method of analogy; graphical methods; various mathematical methods (linear programming, simulation) and other methods.

*With full conviction, I can confirm that the doctoral student has a thorough theoretical and methodological training, skills for independent research work, and the results of the dissertation research prove this judgment of mine.*

➤ **In the applied part of the dissertation research:**

The doctoral student completely correctly applies the methodology proposed in the second chapter for conducting the empirical research. The results of the conducted applied research on agricultural enterprises in Albania are presented at a good level with sufficient volume, scope and content of evidentiary and analytical material. A mathematical model was created for choosing the optimal plan for delivering the products to consumers using the linear programming method. A simulation mathematical model has been created that allows forecasting the movement of cash and barter flows for the sale of products.

The work contains specific results and empirical evidence that objectively reflect the real achievements of the conducted scientific research. The presented dissertation work is a comprehensive, completed research on a current and significant socio-economic problem. In the course of the research, the most significant theoretical and practical problems related to increasing the sales efficiency of agricultural enterprises were raised and discussed.

Stakeholders of the research can be educational and training organizations for the purposes of professional training, business organizations with a different industrial profile, organizations from the non-governmental sector, state and regional authorities.

*I believe that the results of the dissertation research have a high degree of practical applicability, therefore I recommend the project-oriented approach for continued development of the topic.*

## **6. Contributions of the dissertation work.**

Contributions can be divided into scientific and scientific-applied. I accept the contributions as real, credible and proven in the course of the dissertation research.

### **Scientific contributions**

Enrichment of knowledge in the field of marketing and sales management, and its application in the context of increased competition and striving for sustainable development, through a built methodological framework for analysis and planning of conditions for the realization of agricultural production and increasing the efficiency of sales of agrarian enterprises in Albania.

## Scientific and applied contributions

- The developed methodology for managing cash and barter flows for the sale of the production of agricultural enterprises in a transition economy;
- A mathematical model is proposed, which, using the method of linear programming, optimizes a plan for the delivery of agricultural products based on the analysis of the conditions requested by potential users;
- A simulation mathematical model is proposed that allows predicting the receipt of funds from users for shipped products. Information and software support for the proposed IBM PC mathematical models has been developed.
- Recommendations are given for various possibilities of using the developed mathematical models in planning the process of mutual payments with the consumers of agricultural products.

I consider significant achievements to be the personal work of the doctoral student. The conclusions and proposals in the dissertation present Kushtrim Kamili as *an erudite researcher with good theoretical training, with opportunities for creative generalizations and formulating solutions for practice.*

## 7. Critical notes and questions.

- **Main opinion:** quality thesis, excellently illustrated, clearly outlined contributions with potential for development.
- **Critical notes:** I have no significant critical notes on the dissertation research.
- **Recommendations:**
  - It is recommended to clearly define the thesis of the dissertation work and convincingly prove it in the course of the research.
  - A clearer distinction by the PhD student between the concepts of "methodology" and "methodology". In the study, a mixing of the use of the two concepts is evident.
- **Questions:**
  - **Question 1:** What are the disadvantages of the proposed approach for managing the cash and barter flows for the sale of the production of agricultural enterprises in a transition economy?
  - **Question 2:** What are those good western practices for increasing sales efficiency that cannot be applied by Albanian agrarian enterprises and why?

## 8. Published articles and citations.

A total of 5 publications dedicated to the dissertation are presented, in which Kushtrim Kamili is the sole author. Four of them are in English. All have been published in prestigious scientific publications. They have a total volume of 34 pages and have become available to the scientific community in and outside the Agrarian University. In terms of volume and quality, they correspond to the minimum national criteria, ZRASRB and the regulations of the Agrarian University for receiving the ONS "doctor".

I accept all publications as **directly relevant** to the dissertation work. They summarize and publish essential problems and results of research in the dissertation work. The presented abstract reflects objectively the structure and content of the dissertation work.



## CONCLUSION:

Based on the learned and applied by the doctoral student, various research methods, the correctly performed experiments, the generalizations and conclusions made, I believe that the presented dissertation meets the requirements of the ŽRASRB and the Regulations of the Agrarian University for its application, which gives me the reason to evaluate it **POSITIVELY**.

I allow myself to propose to the honorable Scientific Jury to also vote positively and award KUSHTRIM EMRUSH KAMILI the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in the scientific specialty: Organization and management (agriculture and subsectors).

REVIEWER: .....  
(Prof. Dr. V. Nikolova-Alexieva)

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Plovdiv