

STATEMENT OF OPINION

assoc. prof. Stoyanka Petkova Petkova-Georgieva, PhD
Department „Industrial Technologies and Management “,
University “Prof. Dr. Asen Zlatarov” - Burgas,

Member of the scientific jury, according to UMO № 29/06.10.2022г., declared by The Rector
of Burgas Free University

Accordinging: to the dissertation work by Delyan Lazarov Lazarov with the title „FORMATION AND STIMULATION OF THE ENTERPRISES INNOVATIVE ACTIVITY “, submitted for the acquisition of the educational and scientific degree "DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY" in the high education professional field 3.8. Economics in the doctoral program "Economics and Management (Industry)".

1. General characteristics of the dissertation work presented:

The submitted for a statement of opinion dissertation work consists of 267 pages, which include Introduction – 3 pages; First Chapter – 177 pages; Second Chapter – 25 pages; Third Chapter – 39 pages; Conclusion – 2 pages; Contributions described – 2 pages; Bibliography – 17 pages. A total of 341 literary sources are included in the bibliographic reference, of which 3 are in Cyrillic and 338 are Western literature.

2. Characteristics of the scientific issues in the dissertation work:

2.1. Relevance of the problem developed in the dissertation.

In the dissertation, the actuality of the topic is determined by several circumstances, the most important of which are:

1) at the beginning of the 1990s, a process of transformation began in the ownership structure of companies and the forms of management of the industry, which led to the destruction of the then-existing mechanisms of institutional, inter-industry, and inter-firm relationships and interaction;

2) the strong dependence of the Bulgarian economy on financing from European structural funds, which are taking shape as the only source of growth and the main factor for the development of the economy;

3) the main mechanism for increasing the competitiveness of the national economy, its branches, and enterprises are innovation activity, as are the priorities set in the National Strategy for the Promotion of the Development of SMEs and the Innovation Strategy for Intelligent Specialization of Bulgaria.

In a more general plan, the relevance of the topic of the dissertation work is related to the determination of working methods for the transformation of innovation activity into the growth of competitiveness at the level of individual enterprises. This process is the most significant prerequisite for sustainable management of the competitiveness of the Bulgarian economy as a whole and for reaching new levels of development, corresponding to the present and future requirements.

2.2. Identifying and evaluating the most significant contributions of the dissertation.

The object of research in the dissertation is innovation activity in small and medium-sized enterprises as a process of capitalization of the results of scientific research and development for the creation and implementation of innovations. *The subject of the study* is the system of organizational-economic relations and management practices aimed at stimulating innovative development and increasing the effectiveness of innovations in small and medium-sized enterprises.

The main goal of the study was established and fulfilled, namely to develop methodological approaches and tools designed for the creation and implementation of mechanisms to increase innovation activity in small and medium-sized enterprises.

In the dissertation, *all the tasks* set by the doctoral student *are set and fulfilled*.

Some chapters parts of the dissertation have been published in a total of six articles in peer-reviewed journals.

2.3. Basic scientific and scientific-applied prerequisites for determining the dissertation work as meeting the requirements for such:

In the overall scientific and applied research, the main thesis has been proven and investigated, that there is a scientifically substantiated cause-and-effect relationship between innovation and business growth.

The First Chapter of the dissertation there is theoretically investigated and presented 4 main aspects of innovation activities: capabilities, structure, culture, and strategy. Successful innovation management is the result of improving all 4 aspects of innovation management, both individually and in interaction with each other. The Second Chapter is dedicated to the methodical tools for forming, stimulating, and developing the innovation activity of the enterprise as a whole. In The Third Chapter, a comprehensive and extremely innovative in its nature analysis of the results of a study of the innovation activity of companies in the South-Eastern region was carried out, and The Southwest region, based on the main aspects of innovation activity in order to prepare an assessment of the management system of innovation activity and reveal the interrelationships between its aspects in the studied enterprises.

Scientific contributions:

1. Enriching theoretical research on the relationship between innovation and company growth;
2. Formation of an Innovation Roadmap based on a logical sequence of occurrence of events leading to innovative solutions through a transition between real spheres;
3. Systematization of innovation management in four main aspects, namely capabilities, structure, culture, and strategy;
4. Systematization of basic constructions to each of the main aspects;
5. Development of the "circle" of continuous improvement in favor of the growth of companies. Innovation leads to increased capabilities, and increased capabilities lead to the development and implementation of innovations;
6. Upgrading of Porter's 5 forces model.

Scientific and applied contributions:

7. Defining in an innovative way six factors for successful innovation activity;
8. Preparation of a framework instruction for business in the management of innovation development by presenting in one plane the cycle of reproduction of the innovation and the generalized diagram of the life cycle of the innovation and applying the Schmitt rule for allocating resources;
9. Preparation of a conceptual model for turning innovations into a competitive advantage of enterprises;
10. Construction of a methodology for the formation of a Complex Integral Assessment for each of the main aspects of the investment activity;
11. Construction of a Matrix for evaluating the innovation potential of SMEs from SSR and SRI through the prism of the main aspects of innovation activity.

The scope of scientific and applied prerequisites is proven in the dissertation through appropriate research methods. Mainly inductive and deductive approaches, statistical methods, comparative methods, case methods, survey methods, and observation methods are applied. With the help of these methods, applied alone or in combination, the genesis, characteristics, and possibilities for increasing the efficiency of the innovation activity of small and medium-sized enterprises in Bulgaria have been clarified.

3. Critical notes on the work presented.

I believe that the dissertation work has an overall finished look, without the need to make critical remarks. The set scientific goals and tasks related to the research, the subject of the presented dissertation, have been successfully solved. The obtained results are practically applicable, well-interpreted, and illustrated with many figures.

4. Reasons and clearly formulated conclusion.

The reasons and conclusion are clearly stated and well justified.

The results indicated in the opinion from points 1-4 exceed the requirements of the Burgas Free University for the educational and scientific degree "doctor".

This dissertation is in accordance with the requirements laid down in the Regulations for the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions at Burgas Free University.

C O N C L U S I O N

In conclusion of this state of opinion, I give a positive assessment of the dissertation work. The candidate for the educational and scientific degree "DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY" fully meets the requirements of the Law on Educational and Scientific Degrees in the Republic of Bulgaria and of the regulations for its application at Burgas Free University. Delyan Lazarov possesses the professional qualities of a researcher in his field, with proven scientific and practical-applied contributions for the educational-scientific degree " DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY ".

I recommend the scientific jury award Delyan Lazarov Lazarov the educational and scientific degree "DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY" in the high education professional field 3.8. Economics in the doctoral program "Economics and Management (Industry)".

BURGAS
DATA: 09.12.2022

MEMBER OF THE SCIENTIFIC JURY:
/assoc. prof. St. Petkova-Georgieva/