

## **REVIEW**

**official opponent, Doctor of Economics, Professor, Professor of the  
Department of Economics and Entrepreneurship, State Higher Educational  
Institution "Uzhhorod National University" for the dissertation  
Liu Zeyu "Mechanism for managing the competitive advantages of  
territories."**

**applied for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
specialty 073 – Management**

### ***Relevance of the chosen topic of the dissertation research***

The relevance of the chosen topic of the dissertation on "Mechanism for managing the competitive advantages of territories" is based on several key aspects. First, in today's world, competition between regions and territories has grown to levels never seen before. Changes in the global economy, trade, and technology pose unique challenges and opportunities for each region. Understanding and optimizing the mechanisms of managing competitive advantages is becoming a vital task for the effective development of territories in the new conditions. Secondly, the study of this topic will allow to identify and systematize the main factors that affect the competitiveness of territories, their strengths, and weaknesses. The acquired knowledge can serve as a basis for the development of management strategies aimed at increasing the competitiveness of regions. It is also important to disclose the interaction of various aspects of management – economic, socio-cultural, environmental, etc., which will allow considering territories as complex systems, considering all important factors. This approach is critical for developing sustainable development strategies and ensuring that it meets the needs of modern society.

Thus, the study of the mechanisms for managing the competitive advantages of territories is of great importance in the context of modern challenges and opportunities of global economic and socio-cultural dynamics. The results of this dissertation will not only deepen our understanding of the processes that affect the competitiveness of regions, but also provide practical recommendations for effective management and development of territories in the dimensions of the modern world.

The dissertation was carried out within the framework of the scientific topic "Management of competitiveness of enterprises on the basis of innovative marketing" (state registration number 0119U100250) of Sumy National Agrarian University.

Thus, the topic of Liu Zeyu's dissertation, dedicated to the system of mechanisms for managing the competitive advantages of territories, is relevant.

***The degree of validity of the scientific provisions, conclusions and recommendations formulated in the dissertation.***

Acquaintance with the content and structure of Liu Zeyu's dissertation gives grounds to assert the reliability of scientific provisions, conclusions, and recommendations, which is confirmed by the theoretical and methodological validity of the research results, the use of a wide range of methods of scientific knowledge, approbation, and implementation of the author's proposals. The dissertation clearly formulates the relevance of the topic, the object and subject of analysis, the purpose, and objectives. Results obtained are argued by an in-depth analysis of scientific developments of Ukrainian and foreign authors, regulatory framework, statistical information, factual material (218 items).

Having chosen as the object of research the process of formation of the Mechanism of management of competitive advantages of territories, and the subject-theoretical, methodical, and scientific-practical principles of formation and development of the system of mechanism of management of competitive advantages of territories, the dissertation student solved all the tasks, which can be traced in the sections of the dissertation.

In the first section of the work, a study of scientific literature related to the problems of competitive development of territories is carried out. The main information source of the study was the scientometric database Scopus, the largest database of peer-reviewed literature, for the keywords "competitive advantage", "territory", "region". The sample of scientific literature consisted of 566 documents. The period of study of published documents is from 1990 to 2023. The countries with the largest number of publications in the context of specific universities, as well as the most cited publications in this area, were identified. According to the results of the analysis of scientific literature, it was found that there is a clear relationship between the development of territories and its competitiveness, since ensuring competitiveness is one of the main goals of this process. Disparities in regional development have a significant impact on the economic

In the second section of the work, the disproportions of regional development of the People's Republic of China as a factor influencing the formation of competitive advantages of territories are studied. A study of the difference in levels

of economic development between regions of China identified areas with significant potential for growth and identified constraints for less developed regions. The investment attractiveness and development of certain industrial sectors are influenced by the development of infrastructure and access to resources. The level of education, qualifications and human resources of different regions forms different potential for territories in attracting talented workforce and developing knowledge of the established industries. The level of innovation, research and development in different regions forms competitive advantages for those territories that have advantages in the introduction of new technologies and the creation of innovative products. The geographical location of the regions determines the territories that have easier access to key markets and international trade routes, which accordingly creates competitive advantages for such territories.

In the third section of the work, clustering is proposed, the essence of which is to group the regions of China according to the degree of manifestation of their competitive advantages by technological-innovative, educational-intellectual, economic-infrastructural, tourist-cultural groups. The methodical approach of permits to the assessment of territories is not only from the side of administrative division, but it also identifies specific territories that may have similar marketing management strategies in order to achieve a high degree of competitive advantage and impact on the competitiveness of the region as a whole. Management of competitive advantages of regions, considering the cluster approach, allows not only a more complete and specific assessment of the current situation, but also the effective use of resources necessary for harmonious development. The application of the cluster approach in the coordination of the activities of territories has made it possible to create a high-quality competitive territorial brand that will have positive consequences in the social, economic, and other spheres of society.

In general, the content of the work fully reveals the purpose, objectives, and conclusions of the dissertation. Liu Zeyu's dissertation research is carried out at the appropriate scientific level, characterized by the structure and clarity of the results made.

*Scientific novelty of provisions, conclusions and results obtained in the dissertation.*

The analysis of Liu Zeyu's dissertation research showed that the results obtained are theoretically and practically significant. The author has developed

theoretical and methodological support, tools, and recommendations for improving the system of management of competitive advantages of territories, which contain the following elements of scientific novelty:

1. Scientific mapping of the research field of competitive advantages of territories was carried out with the help of bibliometrix R-package, which made it possible to establish that the development of territories has a direct interaction with competitiveness, since ensuring competitiveness is one of the main goals of this process. Accordingly, the competitiveness of territories is determined by their ability to attract investment, tourists, enterprises, and talented specialists compared to other regions.

2. Further development of the study of imbalances in China's regional development, which, unlike the existing ones, is important for understanding various aspects of economic, social, and technological development in different territories and makes it possible to determine the competitive advantages of certain regions and promote the rational distribution of resources and the development of various sectors of the economy in China.

3. The methodical approach of clustering the regions of China according to the degree of manifestation of competitive advantages is substantiated, which provides for the development of economically justified tools using factor analysis for the formation of a system of indicators that comprehensively characterize groups of competitive advantages of technological-innovative, educational-intellectual, economic-infrastructure, tourist-cultural types.

4. A methodical approach to clustering of regions of China according to the degree of manifestation of competitive advantages is proposed, which is based on the allocation of technological-innovative, educational-intellectual, economic-infrastructure, and tourist-cultural competitive advantages and allows to assess territories not only from the side of administrative division, it identifies specific territories that may have similar marketing management strategies in order to achieve a high degree of manifestation of competitive advantages and affect the competitiveness of the region as a whole;

5. A model of dependence of the gross regional product on the degree of manifestation of competitive advantages of territories allows to predict the value of the gross regional product per capita of a certain region of China based on the values of the most influential indicators by groups of competitive advantages.

The materials of the dissertation work are also implemented in the educational

process of Sumy National Agrarian University.

### ***Evaluation of the content of the dissertation***

The peer-reviewed work is aimed at solving many problems of mechanisms for managing the competitive advantages of territories. The dissertation is an original, independent, completed work with a logically justified structure that corresponds to the object, subject and tasks. It fully presents the main attributes of scientific research: purpose, objectives, specific provisions containing scientific novelty, practical significance. The facts of approbation and implementation are reflected suggestions and conclusions of the author.

The dissertation consists of an abstract, a list of abbreviations, a table of contents, an introduction, three sections, conclusions, a list of references and appendices. The main content is presented on 205 pages. The work contains 39 figures and 23 tables.

Analysis of the text of the dissertation research indicates that there is no violation of the requirements of academic integrity by Liu Zeyu. When using statements, ideas, information, the author provides links to specific information sources in accordance with the requirements of copyright law. Of the scientific papers that were written in co-authorship, only those ideas and provisions that were received by the dissertator personally and indicated in the list of publications were used in the work.

Thus, the independence of the conducted research is confirmed by the absence of signs of plagiarism, self-plagiarism, falsification, or other violations. The level of validity of the scientific provisions, conclusions and recommendations formulated in the dissertation is sufficient.

### ***Completeness of the presentation of the main results of the dissertation in published works***

The main results of the dissertation research are published in 9 scientific works, including: 1 collective monograph; 4 articles in journals included in the list of professional publications of Ukraine and included in international scientometric databases; 4 abstracts of reports presented at international and all-Ukrainian scientific and practical conferences.

Acquaintance with scientific publications gives reason to state that the results of research, author's proposals, developed recommendations, reflected in the novelty

points and conclusions to the research, are sufficiently fully set out in the printed works of Liu Zeyu, which meets the requirements of paragraph 11 of the "Procedure for conducting an experiment to award the degree of Doctor of Philosophy", approved by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated March 6, 2019 No. 167 (specialty 075 Management).

### *Comments and discussion points on the content of the dissertation*

Positively assessing the dissertation work, I consider it appropriate to note some provisions that are debatable:

1. Considering the presented theoretical concepts of competitive advantages of territories (para. 1.2), the question arises regarding the specification of the mechanisms of interaction between different aspects of development. How can infrastructure solutions affect ecosystem sustainability and social comfort? How can innovations be implemented in specific territorial settings to maximize their impact on competitiveness? How can the interaction between tourism and other aspects of development take place to ensure an integrated approach to the attractiveness of territories?

2. Considering the economic disparities between regions, it is important to determine the optimal approach to stimulating the development of less developed territories without compromising their unique potentials and characteristics. What are the possible consequences of economic imbalances between China's regions on the competitiveness of the country, and how can a more equitable distribution of investment and development between less and more developed territories be ensured, given their unique characteristics?

3. In our opinion, discussing possible strategies and their impact on the development of regions that do not have as many resources as highly developed areas will be key to China's balanced and sustainable development. Needs to be specified what possible strategies for the development of education and innovation can be applied to reduce the disparity in human resources and stimulate the competitiveness of less developed regions of China, considering geographical location and other factors?

4. Discussion of criteria and indicators in the context of factor analysis is important for determining the most important aspects of regional competitiveness and developing reasonable tools for their classification. However, the author does

not consider what values of factor loads are key in determining the most important indicators of the formation of regional competitiveness.

5. In our opinion, consideration of the methodical approach to clustering regions of China can cause a discussion of the effectiveness and feasibility of certain types of competitive advantages, as well as possible challenges and advantages for regional development within certain categories.

### ***General conclusion and evaluation of the dissertation***

Liu Zeyu's dissertation on "The Mechanism for Managing the Competitive Advantages of Territories" is a completed scientific work performed at the appropriate theoretical level. The structure and scope of the dissertation meets the established standards. The style of the dissertation research is scientific in nature. Analysis of the content of the dissertation, abstract, scientific publications on the topic of research allows us to conclude that all points of scientific novelty are properly reflected in the work.

The results obtained by the dissertation are substantiated and have scientific and practical significance. They will contribute to the activation of the mechanisms for managing the competitive advantages of territories."

Liu Zeyu's dissertation corresponds to the field of knowledge 07 Management and administration of the specialty 075 - management, the requirements of the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine No. 40 dated 12.01.2017. "On Approval of the Requirements for the Design of the Dissertation", the requirements of the "Procedure for Conducting an Experiment on Awarding the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy", approved by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine dated March 6, 2019 No. 167, and its author, Liu Zeyu, according to the results of the public defense, deserves to be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the specialty 075 - Management.

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