

REVIEW

by Valeriia Shcherbak,

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on the dissertation of Liu Zeyu titled "Mechanisms for managing the competitive advantages of territories" submitted for the academic degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the field of knowledge 07 "Management and Administration," specializing in 073 "Management."

The relevance of exploring mechanisms for managing the competitive advantages of territories stems from the dynamic nature of the global economic landscape. In an era characterized by increased globalization and interconnectivity, territories are constantly engaged in fierce competition to attract investments, talents, and businesses. Understanding and implementing effective strategies to enhance and sustain competitive advantages have become crucial for regions seeking economic growth and stability. By delving into this topic, researchers, policymakers, and business leaders can gain insights into the intricate web of factors that contribute to a territory's competitiveness. Examining these mechanisms becomes pivotal for adapting to changing market conditions, fostering innovation, and creating environments conducive to long-term economic prosperity. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has underscored the importance of resilient and adaptive territorial strategies. Territories that can efficiently manage their competitive advantages are better positioned to navigate unforeseen challenges, such as global crises or disruptive technological shifts. The ongoing digital transformation, coupled with emerging trends in sustainable development, further amplifies the significance of exploring mechanisms for managing competitive advantages. Ultimately, as territories strive to position themselves on the global stage, the exploration of effective management mechanisms becomes not only relevant but imperative for sustained economic vitality and resilience in the face of evolving global dynamics. From these perspectives, Liu Zeyu's dissertation on the topic "Mechanisms for managing the competitive advantages of territories" is deemed pertinent and timely. The research delves into the examination of these issues, highlighting their relevance in the current context.

The dissertation research has been conducted in accordance with the thematic focus of the scientific research carried out by the Department of

Marketing and Logistics at Sumy National Agrarian University. Specifically, it aligns with the topic "Management of Enterprise Competitiveness based on Innovative Marketing Principles" (State registration number 0119U100250, 2019-2022). The author has identified a methodological approach to the clustering of regions in China based on the degree of manifestation of competitive advantages.

Describing the structure and content of the dissertation, it is noteworthy that the work comprises an introduction, three main chapters, conclusions, a list of references, and appendices. A brief overview of the main content of the work and research results is provided in the abstract. The main body of the work spans 205 pages, incorporating 23 tables and 39 figures, which complement the author's narrative and illustrate the scientific findings. The study draws upon a substantial number of scholarly sources – 218 in total, attesting to the justification and reliability of the obtained results.

The introduction to the dissertation work presents the relevance and key components of the scientific research: the objectives, tasks, object, subject, and research methods. The introduction also outlines the scientific results achieved by the author and their practical significance.

The first chapter of the dissertation is dedicated to outlining the theoretical and methodological foundations of managing the competitive advantages of territories. The author introduces a scholarly mapping of the research landscape on territorial competitive advantages using the bibliometric R-package. Theoretically, it is substantiated that the development of territories has a direct correlation with competitiveness, as ensuring competitiveness stands as a primary objective in this process. It is established that the competitiveness of territories is determined by their ability to attract investments, tourists, businesses, and talented professionals compared to other regions.

In the second chapter, the state of development in the management of territorial competitive advantages is systematically presented. It is identified that disparities in regional development significantly impact economic progress. The research reveals that regional development disparities in the People's Republic of China influence the formation of territorial competitive advantages. Disparities in economic development levels among China's regions are investigated, uncovering territories with substantial growth potential. The author identifies constraints for less-developed regions, affecting their investment attractiveness, hindering the development of specific industrial sectors, and

impacting infrastructure development and resource accessibility. Educational levels, qualifications, and the workforce potential of different regions shape varied potentials for territories in attracting skilled labor and fostering knowledge-based industries. The level of innovation, research, and development in different regions creates competitive advantages for territories that excel in implementing new technologies and innovating products. The geographical location of regions determines territories with easier access to key markets and international trade routes, thereby creating competitive advantages for such territories.

The third chapter of the dissertation provides a comprehensive analysis of the strategic management mechanisms employed to enhance the competitive advantages of territories. The author delves into the examination of various strategies and approaches utilized globally, drawing attention to their effectiveness in fostering territorial competitiveness. An emphasis is placed on the importance of strategic planning, policy formulation, and collaboration among stakeholders in shaping the competitive landscape of regions. Furthermore, the study explores the role of technology and innovation in bolstering the competitive advantages of territories. It investigates how the adoption and integration of cutting-edge technologies contribute to increased efficiency, productivity, and attractiveness of territories. The author highlights the significance of fostering innovation ecosystems, research clusters, and knowledge-sharing networks as pivotal elements in building sustained competitive advantages. A critical aspect addressed in the dissertation is the impact of environmental sustainability on territorial competitiveness. The research examines how environmentally conscious practices and sustainable development strategies can contribute to the attractiveness and long-term viability of territories. This includes considerations for eco-friendly infrastructure, green technologies, and responsible resource management, positioning environmentally conscious territories at a competitive advantage.

In conclusion, the dissertation not only provides a thorough theoretical foundation but also offers practical insights into the strategic dimensions of managing the competitive advantages of territories. By exploring the intersections of economic development, innovation, and sustainability, the research contributes to the broader discourse on effective territorial management strategies in the dynamic global landscape.

The language and style of the dissertation adhere to the requirements of scientific discourse.

The primary objective of the dissertation is to develop theoretical, methodological, and applied principles for the organizational and economic foundations of managing territorial competitive advantages.

The following tasks were addressed:

1) conduct a scholarly mapping of the research landscape on territorial competitive advantages using the bibliometrix R-package.

2) investigate the disparities in China's regional development as a factor influencing the formation of territorial competitive advantages.

3) outline a methodological approach to clustering regions in China based on the degree of manifestation of competitive advantages.

4) devise a model depicting the dependency of gross regional product on the degree of manifestation of territorial competitive advantages.

5) qualitatively analyze factors impacting the international competitiveness of China's regions, subsequently selecting dependent and independent variables for constructing a regression model for quantitative analysis of influencing factors.

6) based on the research findings, propose a mechanism for managing territorial competitive advantages.

The dissertation's objectives encompass a comprehensive exploration of both the theoretical foundations and practical applications, contributing to the broader understanding of effective territorial management strategies.

The primary scientific outcomes of the research are as follows:

A scholarly mapping of the research landscape on territorial competitive advantages was conducted using the bibliometrix R-package. This facilitated the establishment of a direct correlation between territorial development and competitiveness, as ensuring competitiveness emerges as a fundamental goal in this process. Consequently, the competitiveness of territories is determined by their ability to attract investments, tourists, businesses, and talented professionals compared to other regions.

The study further advanced the examination of disparities in China's regional development, which, unlike existing studies, proves crucial for understanding various aspects of economic, social, and technological development across different territories. It enables the identification of competitive advantages in specific regions, contributing to the rational allocation of resources and the development of various sectors of the Chinese economy.

A methodological approach to clustering regions in China based on the degree of manifestation of competitive advantages was substantiated. This involves developing an economically justified toolkit using factor analysis to form a system of indicators comprehensively characterizing groups of competitive advantages in technological-innovative, educational-intellectual, economic-infrastructure, and tourist-cultural types.

A methodological approach to clustering regions in China based on the degree of manifestation of competitive advantages was proposed. This approach, grounded in the identification of technological-innovative, educational-intellectual, economic-infrastructure, and tourist-cultural competitive advantages, allows the evaluation of territories not only administratively but also identifies specific territories that may have similar marketing strategies aimed at achieving a high degree of competitive advantage manifestation, influencing the region's overall competitiveness.

A model depicting the dependency of gross regional product on the degree of manifestation of territorial competitive advantages was proposed. This model enables the forecasting of the gross regional product per capita in a specific region of China based on the values of the most influential indicators within the groups of competitive advantages.

In her dissertation, Liu Zeyu demonstrated a high level of theoretical expertise in understanding the conceptual foundations of managing organizational and economic principles in constructing mechanisms for managing territorial competitive advantages. An analysis of the plagiarism check report revealed no similarities with other texts, affirming the academic integrity of the dissertation author. The scientific ideas and positions underpinning the dissertation work are appropriately referenced.

Regarding the dissertation's subject, one chapter has been published in a collective monograph, along with four articles in specialized scientific journals in Ukraine. The conference proceedings, comprising four publications, based on the dissertation materials, ensure the proper validation of the research results. Scientific publications adequately elucidate the content of the obtained research outcomes and the dissertation's essence.

The research findings underwent appropriate validation, being presented and discussed at international scientific conferences in Ukraine, including the conference for teachers and graduate students at Sumy National Agrarian University (Sumy, Ukraine, 2022-2023), Kharkiv Innovation Forum (Kharkiv, 2020), Skills for Smart Specialization – Foresight Session in Kharkiv Region

"High-Value-Added Engineering" (Kharkiv, 2021), and "European Cluster Collaboration Platform: Opportunities for Ukrainian Business" (Kharkiv, 2021).

While evaluating the dissertation positively, it is necessary to note certain points of discussion:

1) In the p. 1.3 dissertation, the author emphasizes that advanced infrastructure, including transportation, energy systems, and information technologies, ensures the effective operation of enterprises and provides comfortable living conditions for residents. Consequently, such infrastructure attracts investors and contributes to the increased competitiveness of the territories. The study would significantly benefit if the author provided examples of successful implementation of efficient infrastructure for attracting investments and development and compared it with experiences in Ukraine and China.

2) The dissertation should have delved more into detailing how industry clusters can contribute to the development of competitive advantages for territories and emphasized the importance of considering the specificities of industries for their successful formation. Additionally, it would have been valuable to justify how universities and research institutions participate in cluster associations.

3) In the context of the on-going administrative-territorial reform in Ukraine, it would be expedient to conduct a comparative analysis to ascertain whether specific features of regional development, pivotal for territorial competitiveness in China, can be identified and applied to Ukrainian amalgamated territorial communities (ATCs).

4) On Figure 3.5 of the dissertation, the author introduces the Mechanism for Managing the Competitive Advantages of Territories. However, it is not entirely clear how the author assesses the necessity of a multi-level approach and integration of efforts at various levels, from individual companies to the overall economy of the country, to successfully ensure the competitiveness of territories.

5) Based on the results of the correlation-regression analysis, it is not entirely clear how the indicators TI2 (Number of Patent Applications), TI5 (Projects for New Products Development), and TI6 (Sales Revenue of New Products) influence the of GDP per capita in the "Technologically Innovative" group of competitive advantages. What specific factors and mechanisms of interaction among these indicators contribute to their informativeness and inclusion in the group of the most influential indicators?

However, these comments don't lessen the overall high assessment of the research conducted by Liu Zeyu. After carefully reviewing Liu Zeyu's dissertation and scientific publications, it's important to note her scientific maturity and ability to conduct independent research at a high scientific level. The reviewed dissertation is a completed, independently conducted scientific work characterized by integrity and significant theoretical and applied value.

Liu Zeyu's dissertation on the topic "*Mechanisms for managing the competitive advantages of territories*" aligns completely with the specialty 073 "Management" and meets the requirements outlined in point 6 of the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Resolution "On approving the procedure for awarding the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and canceling the decision of a one-time specialized academic council of a higher education institution, scientific institution on awarding the degree of Doctor of Philosophy dated January 12, 2022, No. 44, and the Requirements for the preparation of a dissertation approved by the order of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine dated January 12, 2017, No. 40. Therefore, the dissertation can be recommended for consideration at the meeting of a one-time specialized academic council, and its author, Liu Zeyu, for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the specialty 073 "Management."

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