

**OPINION**

- From:** Prof. Dr. **Valentina Lyubenova Nikolova-Alexieva**,  
University of Food Technology - Plovdiv,  
Professional field 3.8. "Economy"  
Scientific specialty "Economics and Management"  
(Business Economics and Corporate Governance)
- Regarding:** dissertation for awarding the Educational and scientific degree "**Doctor**"  
under the doctoral program "Finance and Insurance",  
Professional field 3.8. Economics in Scientific field 3. Economic,  
Social and Legal Sciences at the Department of Finance,  
Higher School of Insurance and Finance – Sofia
- Reason** to present the opinion: participation in the composition of the scientific jury on defense of the dissertation according to the Order of the Rector of HSIF-Sofia № 182/22.11.2021 for opening a procedure for defense of dissertation work.
- Author of the dissertation:** **ARMAN HASSANOVICH ISLAMGALEEV**
- Topic of the dissertation:** **INCREASING EFFICIENCY  
IN THE SALES MANAGEMENT  
AND THE REFLECTION ON  
FINANCIAL RESULTS OF  
METALLURGICAL COMPANIES  
IN REPUBLIC OF KAZAKHSTAN**

**1. Relevance of the problem developed in the dissertation**

The new economic reality created in the conditions of Industry 4.0 raises the need for digitalization of the business and transformation of the business model, taking into account the dominant role of the client.

The relevance of the presented dissertation stems from the need to adapt metallurgical enterprises to the characteristics of contemporary turbulent business environment through effective sales management, quality improvement and customer orientation and its commitment to creating goods and services to achieve high results, competitive advantages and sustainable development.

The development of this dissertation is influenced by the fact that there are various studies in the field of marketing and sales management, but insufficient, limited research on how the company's increased customer orientation and what are the factors for achieving higher financial results, in particular for metallurgical companies in Kazakhstan.

*In this regard, it can be concluded that the topic of the dissertation is dissertable and successfully chosen. It is extremely relevant and of great practical importance. The doctoral student has substantiated this significance and topicality very well.*

**2. General characteristics of the presented dissertation**

The dissertation analyzes the current scientific achievements in the field of marketing and sales management, by engaging clients in the creation of products and services and achieving

added value, financial stability and competitive advantage. The list of used literature includes a total of **215 sources**, of which **14 in Cyrillic and 201 in Latin**.

*These literature sources are relevant and directly related to the topic of the dissertation.*

The presented dissertation is **228 pages long**. Structurally, it includes an introduction, **3 chapters, a conclusion and 14 appendices**. The results were obtained using modern tools and are illustrated with appropriately selected **25 figures and 32 tables**. The appendices present questionnaires, measurements and results related to the empirical research.

*In the introduction of the dissertation the main goal and three logically related tasks for its achievement are formulated. The object and the subject of the research are correctly defined. Eight working hypotheses have been raised, which have been verified in the course of the dissertation research.*

***The structure of the dissertation research is logically constructed and corresponds to the set goal and tasks.***

### **3. Evaluation of the obtained scientific and scientific-applied results**

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

The doctoral student has made a serious literature review and made a synthesis of customer-oriented concepts. The key concepts such as loyalty, satisfaction, co-creation of services, commitment, key factors for overall quality management TQMFC, TQMHR, online offline trading (O2O) and others are clarified. *The skillful consideration of the main problems, through the prism of the specifics of customer relations in the metal trade, as well as the characteristics of the state of the market for metal trade in Kazakhstan deserves high praise.* The systematizations and summaries made show in-depth and conscientious work with the literature, skills for application of 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 brackets, which facilitates references to the cited sources.

The participation of the doctoral student in the discussions on the researched problems is active and reflects the ability to express one's own critical thinking and formulate new conclusions and findings.

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

The PhD student has chosen an appropriate methodology and research tools that correspond to the complex, multidimensional nature of the research. The ***systematic and process approach is used***, upgrading of already done research, theoretical analysis and synthesis, comparative analysis, method of observation, experimental and empirical method, as well as descriptive, inductive, deductive methods of summarizing and deriving the essential characteristics of basic concepts. In order to achieve the main goal and the set tasks, a grouping method was used (opinions of authors, methodological characteristics, influencing factors, companies); method of analogy; graphic methods; statistical and other methods. Qualitative and quantitative methods were used to collect primary information during the in-depth interview and expert assessment. In the course of proving the hypotheses and evaluating the measurement model, factor analysis (SFA) with CB-SEM equations using LISREL 8.8 software was used. With the help of the specialized software product SPSS version 23 a comparative analysis of the criteria for checking the normal distribution of statistical values was performed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test; assessment of the cumulative reliability of the variables using alpha-Cronbach; discriminatory confidence rating with Average Variance Extraction (AVE). The field research methods used the questionnaires of employees of the metal trading company Kazpromkompleks LLP and two groups of clients - potential and loyal customers, as well as customers with a high degree of commitment. The sample is a non-random target typological and includes 197 respondents.

*I give a very high assessment of the literature review, the methodology used, as well as in terms of the implementation of the tasks set to achieve the research goal.*

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

The PhD student offers a conceptual framework for increasing customer orientation, taking into account the specifics and applicable in the metallurgical industry. The author proves that emotional satisfaction and successful trading are influenced not only by the company's targeted policy to engage customers, but also by corporate information systems XRM. The XRM system provides automation of all administrative activities of the company within its business processes. A significant contribution of the doctoral student is the analogy and synthesis, based on which he concludes that the market leadership is achieved by metal traders with a small number of employees and lower investment compared to large companies, with a large number of employees and huge investments, which, although they have a full value chain, report low efficiency. Solutions to problems in the trade in metals have been identified and proposed by increasing the customer orientation in the divisions of metallurgical companies.

*The paper contains concrete results and empirical evidence that objectively reflects the real achievements of the research.*

The presented dissertation is a complete study on a topical and significant socio-economic problem. In the course of the research the most significant theoretical and practical problems related to sales management and increasing their efficiency were raised and discussed by identifying the factors for improving the quality and customer engagement in the value chain of metallurgical companies.

All this gives grounds to conclude that Arman Islamgaleev knows the modern literature on the researched problem and has the necessary theoretical level for research and analysis of economic problems, formulation and testing of hypotheses through empirical evidence and formation of scientific summaries.

Stakeholders in the study may be educational and training organizations for the purposes of vocational training, business organizations with different industrial profiles, non-governmental organizations, state and regional authorities.

**4. Evaluation of scientific and applied contributions.**

Contributions can be divided into scientific and scientific-applied ones.

- ❖ To the **scientific contributions** can be counted:
  - enrichment of knowledge in the field of sales management and focus on customer engagement in the development of products and services in the context of trade in metals;
  - systematization of key factors that influence the increase of customer orientation and quality improvement;
- ❖ To the **scientific-applied contributions** can be counted:
  - the proposed author's model of key factors for increasing customer orientation with the help of factor analysis and expert assessment;
  - the proposed original author's methodology for increasing the efficiency of sales by forming individual trajectories of operationalization, which allow standardization, planning the design of customer-oriented solutions, including in the digital environment;
  - recommendations for developing management solutions to improve customer orientation in metallurgical companies.

*I accept the contributions as real, reliable and proven in the course of the dissertation research. I consider the contribution achievements to be the personal work of the doctoral student.*

***The conclusions and proposals in the dissertation are presented by Arman Islamgaleev as an erudite researcher with good theoretical training, with opportunities for creative summaries and formulation of solutions for practice.***

### **5. Evaluation of the publications on the dissertation**

A total of **8 publications** for the period 2018-2020 were presented, three of which are co-authored and five are independent. Three of them are referenced and indexed in Web of Science and Scopus, two of them are published in secondary international databases and three of them are reports from national and international forums. In terms of volume and quality, they meet the requirements for obtaining an Educational and scientific degree (ESD) "Doctor".

I accept all publications as directly related to the dissertation. They summarize and publish significant problems and results of research in the dissertation.

*I give very high marks for the active publishing activity of the doctoral student and his ability, both for individual performance and for team work.*

### **6. Evaluation of the abstract**

The presented abstract of the dissertation is **51 pages long**. It reflects the goals and objectives of the study, the highlights of the individual chapters of the dissertation, as well as the contributions of the author. The abstract is developed in accordance with the requirements and presents the main results and contributions of the dissertation.

### **7. Critical remarks, recommendations and questions**

- **Main opinion:** quality dissertation, excellently illustrated, clearly defined contributions with potential for development.
- **Critical remarks:** I have no significant critical remarks on the dissertation research.
- **Recommendations:** I believe that the results of the dissertation research have a high degree of practical applicability, so I recommend a project-oriented approach to further development of the topic.
- **Questions:**
  - According to the doctoral student, how will the implementation of the strategy for "Client-oriented company" affects the marketing budget of the company studied by him?
  - Is there information on what is the current customer loyalty index in the surveyed company and how, and when this index would change after the implementation of the strategy for "Customer-oriented company"?

### **8. Conclusion**

Given the merits of the dissertation, the relevance and complexity of the researched problems, the need to find effective solutions to them in practice, the good theoretical level of the researched and analyzed problems, it can be summarized that the presented dissertation meets the normative criteria for awarding educational and scientific degree "Doctor" / ZRASRB and the Regulations of HSIF-Sofia for its application /.

The results of the study, dedicated to "**Improving the efficiency of sales management and the impact on the financial results of metallurgical companies in the Republic of Kazakhstan**" provide sufficient grounds for **high assessment** of scientific potential and research opportunities of the doctoral student.

All this allows me to confidently **vote in favor of awarding Arman Hasanovich Islamgaleev the scientific and educational degree "Doctor" in professional field 3.8. "Economics"**.

05.01.2022  
Plovdiv city

Prepared the opinion:

/ prof. Dr. V. Nikolova-Alexieva /