



Вх. № РЖ-20-813 / 16.08.2023

OPINION

Regarding: Diddertation defence on the acquisition of an educational and scientific degree "doctor" according to the procedure announced by the University of Economics - Varna

1. General information.

1.1. Prepared by

Assoc. Dr. Nadezhda Yordanova Dimova, New Bulgarian University - Sofia, Department "Economics", Scientific specialty 3.8. Economy /Marketing/

1.2. Grounds for giving the opinion

Order of the Rector of the University of Economics - Varna No. RD-06-90/07/09/2023. for appointment of the composition of the Scientific Jury and decision from the first meeting of the Scientific Jury, held on 13.07.2023.

1.3. Author of the dissertation work

Andrey Georgiev Minchev, full-time PhD student at the "Marketing" department at the University of Economics - Varna. Pursuant to an Order of the Rector of IU - Varna No. RD 17-402/14.02.2020. is enrolled in full-time doctoral studies, with three years of study over the three-year period. The PhD student has been dismissed with the right of defense according to order No. 17-16/30.01.2023 of the Rector of the IU - Varna.

1.4. Dissertation topic

"Cultural differences as a factor for the internationalization of SMEs from the Republic of Bulgaria to Asia", in professional direction 3.8.Economics, doctoral program "Marketing"

Research supervisor: Associate Professor PhD Vladimir Zhechev, Department of "Marketing", IU - Varna

2. General presentation of the dissertation

The opinion was written in accordance with the requirements of art. 27, paragraph 2 of the Regulations for the implementation of the law on the development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and a notification letter about the decision of the meeting of the Scientific Jury, held on 13.07.2023.

The presented dissertation is focused on cultural differences as a factor for the internationalization of SMEs from the Republic of Bulgaria.

The structure of the dissertation is classic and includes: title page, table of contents, introduction, three chapters, conclusion, references and appendices.

In the course of the exposition, which includes a total of 299 pages, the separate elements of the structure of the dissertation are presented in a concise, logically consistent and thorough manner, clarifying the theoretical statements, the analysis, and making specific conclusions and recommendations.

196 literary and information sources are used and integrated, with an appropriate part in the exhibition. 15 appendices are attached, which support the conclusions and recommendations made by the doctoral student.

The overall exposition and presentation of the dissertation reinforces my opinion that the doctoral student can prepare an independent, scientifically-grounded research for the corresponding educational and scientific degree.

3. Publications and participation in scientific forums

Synthesized, the main results of the conducted research on the topic of doctoral student Andrey Minchev's dissertation work are presented in three reports and three articles.

An impression is made by the heterogeneous direction of publications, in terms of places of publication and participation in scientific conferences, which, as an approach to presenting the results



of scientific research by the doctoral student, is interesting, expedient and enriches the overall strategy for the defense of the dissertation.

The doctoral student has two reports from conferences, one report in an international journal, three articles in prestigious scientific publications in the country.

He participated in two conferences organized by the University of Economics - Varna and VUZF - Sofia.

In reality, the publications presented by the doctoral student meet the quantitative requirements under Article 35, Paragraph 1, Items 1-4 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of IU - Varna.

4. Assessment of the structure and content of the dissertation work.

The dissertation submitted for opinion is devoted to an interesting and significant research problem, namely cultural differences. The research scope is more specific, namely the internationalization of SMEs from the Republic of Bulgaria to Asia. The PhD student has based his hypotheses on the possibility of cultural differences being essential for a marketing program to adapt to Asian markets. The fact that marketing communication methods must necessarily be tailored precisely to these cultural differences in the various markets is not overlooked.

The presence at the beginning of this structuring and the author's positions on the subject under consideration confirm my opinion that the doctoral student can summarize, analyze and structure appropriately, completely in compliance with the topic of the dissertation.

There are no excesses and deviations from the main issue. The possibility of the doctoral student to handle the specialized terminology and draw justified conclusions is evident, adding his opinion and opinion at this educational level.

I believe that the thesis of the doctoral student a, namely: "the international wine business in the Asian market is economically attractive for Bulgarian wine producers, but Asian countries have comparative cultural differences that have an impact on the attitudes of wine producers towards internationalization in Asia" is fully proven with a different and targeted - applied methodology.

In the first chapter, the conceptual foundations in the areas of SME internationalization, cultures and attitudes are presented. Theoretical aspects of the internationalization of small and medium-sized enterprises, cultural differences in the process of internationalization of firms are presented, and research on attitudes is described.

In the second chapter, a comparative cultural analysis of Bulgaria and Asian countries is made. A conceptual and operational model of the study of cultural attitudes is also presented. The chapter concludes with a presentation of the sample, research methods and data collection tools, and hypothesis testing.

In the third chapter, the analysis and interpretation of the results of the survey, from the conducted interviews with the winemakers, and the conclusions and recommendations from the study of the influence of cultural differences on attitudes are presented.

The submitted abstract is 29 pages long. Accurately, correctly and clearly presents the structure and content of the research, conclusions and recommendations that the doctoral student has made. Contributions and posts are well laid out.

The literary and informational sources used are correctly cited.

5. Identification and assesment of tscientific and scientific-applied contributions in the dissertation thesis

The scientific contributions indicated by the dissertation are well formulated in general and in general. In all three aspects, the specified contributions have been achieved.

I accept the contributions thus shaped and worded, but I feel that the thesis itself would benefit from some of them being described in more detail. Apart from the stated theoretical contributions, I believe that in reality a conceptual model for the internationalization of Bulgarian small and medium-



sized wine producers in Asian markets has been proposed and tested, and the recommendations for overcoming identified difficulties in the internationalization of Bulgarian wine producers in Asian markets have been practically defined.

The recommendations given by the doctoral student are accurate, clear and correctly derived, based on the analysis made.

6. Confirmed or unconfirmed plagiarism in the dissertation and the abstract

No plagiarism was found in the dissertation and in the abstract presented by Andrey Minchev.

7. Critical notes and recommendations

I have no critical remarks about the PhD student.

I have a recommendation for the PhD student to publish his dissertation in the form of a monograph to make it even more widely available to various audiences who would be interested in it.

8. Questions for the PhD student.

I would like to ask the PhD student the following question:

*How would you explain in general terms the importance of the relationship "emotions - attitudes - cultural differences" for the overall marketing strategy, through the prism of the research in the dissertation?

9. Conclusion

In conclusion, based on the analysis of the presented dissertation work on the topic: "Cultural differences as a factor for the internationalization of SMEs from the Republic of Bulgaria to Asia" by PhD student Andrey Georgiev Minchev, it can be concluded that there is an in-depth study - in theoretical and practical – applied aspect and excellent conclusions and recommendations are made.

The dissertation itself represents an original and in-depth scientific study and fully meets the requirements for awarding the ONS "Doctor".

Based on the indisputable positive evaluations presented so far and the results achieved by the doctoral student, I propose to the respected scientific jury that Andrey Georgiev Minchev be awarded the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in the scientific specialty 3.8. "Economics" /Marketing/.

August 18, 2023
Sofia

Member of the jury:

/Assoc.Prof.PhD Nadezhda Dimova/

Заличена информация съгласно
ЗЗЛД и регламент (ЕС) 2016/ 679

STANDPOINT

by Professor Bistra Konstantinova Vassileva, PhD from the University of Economics-Varna

on a dissertation for the award of an educational and scientific degree PhD
in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences,
professional field 3.8 Economics, scientific specialty „Marketing“

1. General information.

This standpoint was prepared by Prof. Bistra Vassileva, PhD from the University of Economics-Varna, appointed as a member of the scientific jury according to the Order of the Rector of the University of Varna No. RD 06-90 of 05/07/2023. The decision to prepare a standpoint was taken on the first meeting of the scientific jury on 13.07.2023 at 10:00 a.m.

The author of the dissertation is Andrey Georgiev Minchev with the topic of the dissertation “Cultural differences as a factor for the internationalization of SMEs from the Republic of Bulgaria to Asia”.

2. General presentation of the dissertation (in accordance with the requirements of Article 27, Paragraph 2 of the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria)

Structurally, the dissertation consists of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, references and 15 appendices in a total volume of 299 pages, of which 133 pages are main text (three chapters), 15 pages of bibliography and 150 pages of appendices. The main text contains 28 tables, 8 figures and 38 diagrams. The bibliography includes 194 information sources, of which 22 are in Bulgarian language. The appendices include the survey with which the empirical study was conducted, the results of the statistical hypothesis testing, and the multiple regression analysis conducted. The author uses and correctly cites the scientific literature in the dissertation. He refers to well-known and intensively cited scholarly publications that include fundamental theoretical propositions and their contemporary approbations and modifications in the field of international marketing and cross-cultural management.

The topic of the dissertation fully corresponds to its content and is increasingly relevant in the modern global world. Cultural differences between country-markets have a significant and sometimes critical impact on the market performance of companies and for this reason must be

carefully analyzed and evaluated in the process of developing marketing strategies when entering international markets.

The purpose of the dissertation directly follows from the title of the dissertation, although the repeated repetition of the term “internationalization” makes it difficult to perceive the stated purpose. The formulated research tasks define the dissertation rather as a study of the attitudes of Bulgarian winemakers towards internationalization in Asia in the context of cultural differences. I have some reservations about the wording of the object and subject of the dissertation, since the study of “the influence of cultural differences on attitudes” implies the application of a causal rather than a descriptive research approach. The logical relationship “object and subject of the research - main research thesis - goal and tasks of the research”, in my opinion, requires clarification.

3. Publications and participation in scientific forums: compliance with the quantitative requirements under Art. 35, para. 1, items 1-4 of the Regulations for the development of the academic staff at UEV.

According to the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at UEV, the doctoral student's publications and participation in scientific forums must meet the minimum national requirements for awarding the educational and scientific degree PhD, according to Art. 2b, para. 2 and para. 3 of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, if the dissertation work is not published as a monograph.

According to the reference-declaration submitted by the dissertation student for the fulfillment of minimum national requirements for awarding the educational and scientific degree PhD in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, according to Art. 26 of ZRASRB, he has published 3 independent scientific articles, published in non-refereed journals with scientific review with a total of 30 points for the indicators in Group D, which corresponds to the quantitative requirements under Art. 35, para. 1, items 1-4 of the Regulations for the development of the academic staff at UEV.

4. Assessment of the structure and content of the dissertation (compliance with the requirements of Article 34, paragraph 2 and paragraph 3 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics - Varna), opinion on the correctness of the dissertation abstract and the lexical and stylistic characteristics of the dissertation.

The dissertation work in structural terms consists of an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, references and appendices. The chapters are balanced in volume and structure. The author takes the traditional approach to research, starting in Chapter One with a thorough and extensive review of theoretical positions in the field of SME internationalization, cultural differences in the process of internationalization of firms, and theoretical models for the study of attitudes. The comparative cultural analysis of Bulgaria and the studied Asian country-markets (Thailand, China, Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Vietnam, Malaysia) was carried out according to the popular methods of Hofstede and House in the first paragraph of the Second Chapter. The author presented a conceptual model for the attitudes of Bulgarian wine producers towards internationalization, which he adapted from Gripsrud and based on which he formulated four hypotheses for the relationship between the variables in the model. This model is further developed into a research model with clearly defined variables. The empirical research was planned and conducted correctly, and the type of sample and the research tools are presented in the third paragraph of the Second Chapter. The statistical analysis methods used are applied correctly (Third Chapter), and the details are reflected in the appendices to the dissertation work.

The abstract is written in accordance with the requirements and adequately reflects the key moments of the content of the dissertation and the results of the conducted empirical research. In it, the author presented the topicality of the topic, object, subject, main research thesis, goal and objectives of the research, its methodology and limitations, as well as the contributing moments. The content and main parts of the dissertation are presented correctly.

The dissertation student demonstrates good knowledge of specialized terminology and uses it professionally. The writing style is strictly scholarly.

5. Identification and assessment of scientific and scientific-applied contributions in the dissertation.

The dissertation student formulated one theoretical, one practical-methodological and one practical contribution. In my opinion, these contributions are scientific-applied with a predominantly applied aspect, since they do not reflect significant novelties or unexplored aspects in the scientific field in which the subject of the dissertation falls. I do not accept third contribution, because the definition of recommendations is the final part of any analysis, especially since in the scientific literature and research reports, numerous recommendations are available for overcoming

identified difficulties in the international marketing activities of Bulgarian wine producers in Asian markets.

6. Detected or undetected plagiarism in the dissertation and the abstract.

In my work on the PhD thesis and the author's abstract, I did not find direct borrowings from authors and materials in the scope of international marketing and international marketing management. For the precision of my conclusion about the presence of plagiarism, the content of the abstract was checked with the anti-plagiarism software StrikePlagiarism and the following similarity coefficients were obtained. The similarity factor 1 is 11.22%, which indicates that 11% of the citations contain a phrase of 5 words or longer found in the university's home database, the RefBooks database, or Internet resources. The similarity factor 2 is 3.91%, which indicates that approximately 4% of the auto-reference contains a phrase of 25 words or more found in the above databases. This gives me grounds to conclude that I have not detected plagiarism in the dissertation work and the abstract.

7. Critical notes and recommendations.

My critical notes and recommendations are systematized in the following directions:

About the methodology of the dissertation work

The topic of the dissertation is “Cultural differences as a factor for the internationalization of SMEs from the Republic of Bulgaria to Asia”. In my opinion, it should have been clarified in the topic of the dissertation that it is about wine producers. Internationalization, which the author presents in detail in the theoretical part of his work, is multifaceted and cultural differences have a different impact on different methods of market entry. International market entry strategies are touched upon only briefly in the context of the impact of cultural differences. On the other hand, the fifth limitation of the research, that the Bulgarian wine product was examined without taking into account the specifics of the different categories and types of wine, can bias both the interpretation of the research results and the recommendations made. The Asian markets studied are culturally diverse (Charts 1 to 7), and the cultural environment directly influences consumer attitudes and behavior. This suggests a differentiated analysis of the survey results in Chapter Three, or at least establishing the presence or absence of differences in attitudes towards the studied Asian markets, which the author has mentioned as belonging to different clusters. The refinement of the topic is the basis of the relationship “object and subject of the study - main research thesis - aim and tasks of the study”, in which, in my opinion, there are logical inconsistencies. The third

research task, formulated in the introduction of the dissertation work (p.12), is related to the conduct of research, which is usually a means of achieving a certain scientific result.

About the research approach and methods

The research method was generally developed correctly. I cannot accept the choice of the sampling method for this particular research project given my comments regarding the methodology. In my opinion, the telephone interview is not a suitable method to research attitudes, especially when the respondents are managers. Regarding the operationalization of variables and measurement scales, I have asked questions to the dissertation student.

Regarding the analysis of the results of the empirical study

The results of the empirical research are presented consistently with the applied methods of primary data collection. The dissertation work would benefit, especially from the point of view of managers as users of these results if the analysis was presented along the modules of the conceptual model. Some inaccuracies were admitted in the application of statistical methods for data processing and analysis. The results of the linear regression analysis were interpreted assuming that the coefficient of determination was in some cases less than 1. The coefficient of determination should have been presented in the main text of Chapter Three and not only in the appendices. It would be interesting to see if there are differences in managers' attitudes depending on their profile and the profile of the companies they work for. In general, the text in Chapter Three is descriptive and retells data from univariate and bivariate distributions of variables.

8. Questions to the dissertation student.

(1) In addition to empirical data analysis methods, what other scientific methods were used in the development of the dissertation?

(2) What kind of methods are used to operationalize the components of attitude toward internationalization as variables in the research model (Figure 8, p. 74)?

(3) How are the items in the attitudinal scales selected?

(4) What is the distribution of respondents according to the designated wine-growing regions in the country?

(5) Make an explanation from a scientific and practical-applied aspect of your following statement: "To a certain extent, the conclusions support the thesis of the dissertation work that the international wine business in the Asian market is economically attractive for Bulgarian wine

producers, but Asian countries have comparative cultural differences, which impact winemakers' attitudes toward internationalization in Asia” (p. 130).

(6) Justify from a marketing point of view your recommendation for creating blended wines with the participation of Bulgarian vine varieties and popular foreign vine varieties. Which markets does this recommendation apply to (page 131)?

The questions asked are constructive and aim to stimulate a fruitful scientific discussion during the defense.

9. Conclusion.

The findings and conclusions made in this standpoint allow me to give a positive assessment and vote “YES” for awarding Andrey Georgiev Minchev the educational and scientific degree PhD in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.8 Economics, scientific specialty „Marketing“.

28 August 2023

Standpoint prepared by

Заличена информация съгласно
ЗЗЛД и регламент (ЕС) 2016/ 679

/Prof. Bistra Vassileva, PhD/

Prepared by **Assoc. prof. Ivan Rashkov Marchevski PhD.**, Department of "Marketing" at the Dimitar A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov. Member of the Scientific Jury, created by Order No. RD 06-90 from 09/07/2023 of the Rector of University of Economic - Varna and Decision of the First meeting of the Scientific Jury from 07/18/2022 to determine reviewers for the contest, based on Art. 9 of ZRAS in the Republic of Bulgaria, art. 36, para. 3 of the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at the University of Economics - Varna and Decision of the FS of the Faculty of Management, Protocol No. 2 of 03/07/2023.

Author: Andrey Georgiev Minchev, PhD student at the department of "Marketing" in the University of Economics – Varna

Dissertation topic: CULTURAL DIFFERENCES AS A FACTOR FOR THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF SMEs FROM THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA TO ASIA

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE DISSERTATION

A dissertation entitled: "Cultural differences as a factor for the internationalization of SMEs from the Republic of Bulgaria to Asia", an abstract, a reference to scientific contributions and a list of Andrey Minchev's publications related to the topic of the dissertation are submitted for review.

The object of the dissertation is "...cultural differences in the process of internationalization in Asia of small and medium-sized Bulgarian wine producers". The subject of the dissertation is "the influence of cultural differences on the attitudes of small and medium-sized Bulgarian wine producers towards internationalization". In my opinion, the object and the subject defined in this way create different expectations for the content of the development than the real emphasis of the research.

The research thesis advocated by the author is that: "the international wine business in the Asian market is economically attractive for Bulgarian winemakers, but Asian countries have comparative cultural differences that affect winemakers' attitudes towards internationalization in Asia". The main objective of the research is: "... based on a theoretical review of the impact of cultural differences on attitudes on internationalization in Asia building a model for the analysis of cultural attitudes, to investigate the correlational dependencies between cultures, attitudes and internationalization and to offer conclusions and recommendations for the future internationalization of Bulgarian wine producers in Asia". To achieve this goal, the author sets 3 research tasks. Based on a review of research on the issue, Minchev defined four research hypotheses, the validity of which was verified using data from a field study he conducted.

The structure of the manuscript matches the usual structure of such kind of researches. The work has a volume of 148 non-standard pages of main text which includes an introduction, 3 chapters, a conclusion and a list of references, including 176 titles (162 of scientific research nature). There are 15 appendices, as well as a list of the tables, figures and diagrams. The structure of the dissertation is balanced and follows a logic corresponding to the objectives of the research. The first chapter has theoretical-cognitive nature and examines questions about

the stages in the process of firm internationalization, with an emphasis on SMEs, models for studying the influence of the cultural factor in international business and the main theories about "attitudes" as a phenomenon affecting people's behaviour. The second chapter has two emphases: firstly, an analysis of the cultural profile of selected Asian countries and a comparison with that of Bulgaria, mainly through Hofstede's methodology, and secondly, a presentation of the author's model for studying the influence of the "attitudes" of company managers towards the internationalization of activities with a focus on a specific market (Asian). In the third chapter, the results of a field survey among a managers of SMEs from the wine industry, are presented with two emphasis - presentation and analysis of the results of the survey and, based on them, formulating recommendations to the company management and to government structures engaged with the promotion of the export of Bulgarian wines to improve their work.

ASSESSMENT OF THE STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE DISSERTATION

The relevance of the researched problem is beyond doubt. There are at least three reasons for such a conclusion. Firstly, the number of research studies focusing on the firm internationalization and the peculiarities of SMEs is consistently high. In this context, finding new evidence for the validity of theoretical models could be considered as an enrichment of the theory in this direction. Secondly, the phenomenon of "culture" is among the key factors influencing the process of firm internationalization. In this regard, developing a toolkit for its study and obtaining real data about the influence of the cultural factor on managerial decision-making in a specific product-market context would enrich both theory and business knowledge. Thirdly, the promotion of the export of Bulgarian wines and the entry into a large market such as that of Asia is a priority both, for a number of programs at the national level and for big number of Bulgarian wine producers. In this sense, the potential users of the research results are many.

The approach chosen by the author in solving the scientific problem is correct. It follows the usual logic of this type of research - an overview of the existing knowledge with an outline of the currently unsolved problems, a methodological part, testing of the developed toolkit and a discussion of the results. In the scientific material submitted for review, the author demonstrates skills in processing and critical analysis of existing knowledge, as well as an ability to develop this knowledge by arguing own theses and models. In order to build the theoretical foundation of the proposed model the author makes a critical analysis of existing knowledge. The result of this is systematization of what was achieved until now, identification of discussion areas and possibilities for enriching the theory. An experimental method was applied to carry out the empirical research. In the analysis of the results from the field research, basic statistical techniques were used with greater emphasis than necessary on univariate distributions and descriptive characteristics of the sample.

The language and writing style used by Minchev are clear, without unnecessary complications and meet the standards of scientific research, a fact that is now less and less found in similar studies. However, one could expect more precision in the expression and use of some of the categories accepted in the theory.

The references are used correctly. In the dissertation, I did not find any use of foreign texts beyond the normal reference.

The abstract correctly present the content of the dissertation and provides the necessary clarity regarding the research tasks and the scientific results achieved by the author.

CONTRIBUTIONS

The dissertation is a development that may cause the attention of researchers and practitioners interested in firm internationalization. The very intention of the author to link two of the fundamental phenomena predetermining the prospects for the development of SMEs in a long-term aspect - the way in which the process of company internationalization starts and proceeds and the influence that the attitudes about the cultural proximity/distance between foreign markets have on this process, deserves a good appreciation.

The contributions of the dissertation work can be divided into two groups:

1. Enrichment of the theory in three directions. First, a comparative analysis and partial empirical testing of the suitability of some of the most popular models for firm internationalization in the context of SMEs for a specific industry – wine industry. Second, an original model is proposed to assess the influence that management attitudes have on decisions related to entering the international market. Third, the knowledge in the field of company management has been enriched by linking common behavioural patterns to the decision-making process in the company.
2. The developed of applied knowledge in two directions. Firstly, the model developed by the author is adapted for use in a specific product market context (the wine industry) and tested with real data. Secondly, based on the data from the field research, recommendations have been formulated, the following of which is a prerequisite for increasing the market efficiency of small and medium-sized Bulgarian companies that would decide to enter a foreign market, which is considered to be culturally different from Bulgarian.

CRITICAL NOTES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

To the current dissertation as well as to any scientific research, recommendations can be made, which most often reflect the point of view of the reader and do not cast doubt on the qualities of the work. What I mean:

1. In general, the "useful volume" of the dissertation is less than the accepted standards (148 pages in total). In addition, an unnecessarily large part of the exhibition falls on a detailed comparison between the cultural profiles of Bulgaria and the 7 Asian markets selected for analysis based on ready and publicly available information (the Hofstede-insights website - <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison-tool> and the GLOBE project results site - <https://globeproject.com/results#country>).
2. Although the structure of the dissertation generally follows the established logic, it could be argued how relevant is the presence of information about the research design

of the field research (sampling parameters, statistical tests, etc.) in chapter two, which has a methodological nature.

3. The justification of operationalizing variables and their binding into main categories and subcategories needs more precise argumentation. Reference to one or another existing model/research result, each applied to a different subject and in a different context, is not a sufficient basis for this.
4. The toolkit for testing the developed model does not allow in-depth study and formulation of valid conclusions about the nature and influence of a complex construct such as "attitudes" on the behaviour of people/managers.
5. Remarks can be directed to the results visualization. Especially for the charts!

QUESTIONS

How would the author explain the discrepancy between the degree of cultural similarity/dissimilarity between Bulgaria and the assessed 7 Asian markets, according to the data from the Hofstede model, and according to the data from the field survey? In this light, how would he comment his research thesis?

GENERAL ASSESSMENT AND CONCLUSION

I could summarize that the presented dissertation work and the publication activity of doctoral student Andrey Minchev meet the criteria laid down in the ZRASRB. This gives me the reason to propose to the respected Scientific Jury to award the educational and scientific degree "Doctor"/PhD in the scientific specialty "Marketing" to Andrey Georgiev Minchev.

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01/09/2023.

Assoc. prof. Ivan Marchevski, PhD