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REVIEW

of the doctoral thesis **AMMAR IBRAHIM SHIHAB, M.A.**
ENTITLED “LOCAL GOVERNMENT WEBSITE MANAGEMENT
METHODOLOGY”

Promotor: Dr hab. Engineer Kesra Nermend, Prof. US

Taking the editorial issue into consideration, the doctoral thesis is 228 pages long, including 142 of the main text, and comprises of the biography (258 national and international entries, including the normative acts and the Internet sources), 40 summary tables, 14 charts and 36 figures. At the end of the paper there are 7 appendices, in which there are, for instance, questionnaires and result tables presented.

The patterns of the questionnaires used in the research were put in the appendix, which I believe to be relevant in connection with the result tables.

Considering the formal part of the doctoral thesis of **Ammar Ibrahim Shihab, M.A.**, I state that the language correctness, the paper layout, the style and the proper use of references to the sources and the biography are appropriate. The doctoral student presents the good mastery of paper writing technique, except minor mistakes.

This dissertation consists of five chapters, introduction and conclusion. Chapter one includes discussion on the role of websites of local government units (LGU) in the regional development and improvement of the quality of local government services. Chapter two is focused on content management systems, management of website content and issues relating to information architecture and websites usability. Chapter three describes methods and tools in the procedure of analysis and evaluation of local government websites. This chapter demonstrates also the web tracking system process including websites testing as well as the procedure for selection of LGU websites for further analysis. Chapter four, describes and presents the researcher's method for testing usability of websites of local government units as well as the results of sub studies. Chapter five presents verification of usability of proposed referential model for LGU website. The conclusions include summary of carried our surveys and results that validate the posed hypothesis.

The layout of the paper is proper, but Chapter 5 in comparison with the others is disproportionately smaller (11 pages) – this chapter could be expanded or included in the previous chapter. Chapter 2 in comparison with the others is disproportionately big – even four times in comparison with Chapter 5.

Competitiveness and entrepreneurship play a significant role in the process of globalisation in the world together with the development of market economy in Poland. Entrepreneurship is realized with the use of enterprises or local government units.

This enterprise could be stimulated in the particular manner with the possibility to use UE funds, and especially in the scope of the development of the economic potential. Especially, the foreign capital inspires the actions connected with entrepreneurship either individual or realized with the use of local government units for the region development. This entrepreneurship can be induced in the special manner with the possibility to cooperate with new entities in a lot of areas, also including with the use of websites of local government units. Competitiveness among local government units in this scope is becoming a requirement today, where a lot of investors are looking for a place to invest taking various criteria into account. Attracting a potential investor by public sector units in order to situate their company in this place, and especially in the given community, takes a special place in the investment activity of enterprises, which influences the social-economic development of the given government unit. Here, it should be acknowledged that the Author of the doctoral thesis undertook this issue, having regard to local government website management methodology.

In my opinion, raising the research issue by the Author concerning local government website management is very apt in the light of current needs, especially in the context of the discussion on their competitiveness and entrepreneurship. The current social-economic development results in the fact that only the entities which can adjust to market needs are able to survive, therefore the actions which can contribute to the development of competitiveness of the entities in a given country, in this case local government units, are extremely important. The Author's contribution to improve the knowledge of the situation and attractiveness of local government units from the point of view of economic competitiveness through websites should be acknowledged as positive, especially that empirical studies with the use of a lot of research methods were developed thoroughly in this scope in the thesis. The apt title of the thesis should be emphasized which is wholly reflected in the analyses.

In the scope of the detailed notices concerning the thesis, one should indicate negative aspects:

- the problem of territorial marketing was marginalised, which also refers to the discussed research problem (for instance, the work by A. Szromnik),
- the problem of management of local government units was only presented to a basic extent, including the theoretical issue in the scope of public management.

The most vital and valuable advantages of the paper include:

- the development of the author's model of local government website management (according to the main aim "...the development of the reference model of the local government website service with the content adequate for the needs of national and foreign users.")
- the presentation of the solutions in the scope of management of these services (for example, the elaboration of aggregate measure, the creation of the webtracking system to study usefulness of local government websites in three thematic categories of information: investment, business, tourism)
- the verification of the author's management model of local government websites.

Simultaneously, the benefits of the thesis include:

- not only English websites were analysed but also Polish ones regarding the discussed problem,
- the role of e-administration (e-government) and the social participation while managing the local government was drawn attention to,
- the problem of localization of business activity was emphasized, which is often forgotten in the literature nowadays.

The questionable remarks include the following:

- what did the doctoral student take into consideration while choosing the persons verifying the model?
- the issue of indicating the most vital information which should be put in local government websites (the creation of three thematic groups, i.e. business, investment, tourism, is, in my opinion, justifiable, but should they include five most important issues according to the respondents? This issue is subjective; how many the researcher will take for further consideration). I would like to ask for the answer to the questions in this context: Which criterion did the doctoral student take into account choosing just five and not, for instance, four or six most important issues according to the

respondents? Are these five most important issues chosen by the respondents also chosen in another research in the literature or how much do they agree with them?

The general evaluation of the thesis and the final conclusion.

The reviewed doctoral thesis of **Ammar Ibrahim Shihab, M.A. entitled “LOCAL GOVERNEMENT WEBSITE MANAGEMENT METHODOLOGY”** is correct in terms of methodology, essence and formality. The Author presented the knowledge of theoretical and literature issues, and especially pragmatic ones during the empiric research and statistical analyses.

The thesis is characterised by consistency of the undertaken analyses and scientific inquiries, realizing the accepted research aims. The doctoral thesis is of a great scientific-cognitive value as well as of an application one, consequently, I believe that this paper should be presented to the wider audience by publishing it as a monograph.

On the basis of the overall assessment of the paper, **I state that the doctoral thesis of Ammar Ibrahim Shihab, M.A. meets all the requirements established in the scope of sciences of management defined in the act on degrees and titles as well as on degrees and titles in the field of art dated on the 14th of March, 2003**, thereupon I move a proposal to allow the doctoral student to pursue the further stages of the procedure in the doctoral dissertation in the Faculty of Economics and Management of the University of Szczecin.

Kraków, the 7th of December, 2015

