

PhD Thesis Evaluation Report (External Reviewer)

Candidate Name:

Emmanuel Ebo Arthur

Thesis Title:

Influence of Selected Determinants of the Knowledge Production Function on Innovation Performance in Region

University/Department:

University of Pardubice / Faculty of Economics and Administration

Date of Examination:

2025-07-23

Thesis' Overview:

This thesis examines how selected knowledge-related factors and mechanisms, such as knowledge management, networks, and diffusion, influence innovation performance in “moderate and emerging EU countries”. It also evaluates the moderating effects of such factors as competition intensity and regulatory quality. Empirical analysis relies on multiple data sources and statistical methods (Probit regression, IV-Probit, Conditional Fixed Effects Poisson). The study is comprehensive, offering both theoretical and practical insights, and fills a notable gap in regional innovation literature.

The thesis consists of seven (7) chapters, structured as follows: Ch 1: The theoretical framework of the study; Ch 2: Production function to knowledge function; Ch 3: Research gap and aim; Ch 4: Data and method of the study; Ch 5: Results of the study; Ch 6: Discussion; Ch 7: Conclusions

The work and effort invested by the author in conducting research and drafting the thesis are commendable. A few points worth highlighting have been included at the end of this report, in section “Detailed Comments & Feedback”.

Evaluation Criteria (Ratings 1–5):

1. Originality of Research: **4**
2. Significance of Contribution: **4**
3. Literature Review: **5**
4. Research Methodology: **4**
5. Data Analysis and Interpretation: **4**
6. Clarity and Structure: **3**
7. Use of Language and Presentation: **4**
8. Referencing and formatting: **4**
9. Awareness of Limitations and Future Work: **4**
10. Overall Scholarly Merit: **4**

Reviewer Information:

- **Name:** Anna Visvizi
- **Institution:** SGH Warsaw School of Economics, Al. Niepodleglosci 162, 02-554 Warsaw, Poland
- **Date:** 2025-07-23
- **Signature:**

Detailed Comments & Feedback:

1. Strengths of the Thesis:

The thesis demonstrates solid theoretical grounding, particularly through its engagement with endogenous growth theory, the knowledge production function, and innovation performance. It is supported by empirical work. The choice of under-researched variables, including knowledge-based HR practices, and focus on “moderate and emerging European Union countries” make this study highly relevant and timely.

2. Areas for Improvement:

2.1. the title of the thesis

Please, note that the title of the thesis “Influence of Selected Determinants of the Knowledge Production Function on Innovation Performance in Region” seems to be incomplete, i.e. the region indication is missing, also the mention of “selected determinants” is ambiguous.

Suggestions for revision: Make the title more specific so that it works as your visiting card in the future.

2.2. The structure of the thesis

The most important issue to be raised here is the structure of thesis. Even if an introduction is provided as a means of (i) sketching the rationale underpinning research presented in the thesis, and (ii) providing a direction of the discussion, the reader does not really obtain a guidance as to the objectives, rationale, timeliness, methods, structure, and findings of the thesis. To be fair, all these elements have been included in the thesis, yet, the way the specific components of the thesis have been put together is not conducive to a clear target-oriented communication with the reader.

Suggestions for revision: consider writing a introductory Chapter 1 where a snapshot of the “story” the subsequent chapters will unveil is presented, including the introduction of the research questions/objectives. Chapter 2, through literature review, should enable you to make a case for the existence of a research gap. Chapter 3, should be devoted to a conversation on how, in light of the existing research, the problem you have identified can be addressed. Chapter 4 would offer an insight into methods. Chapter 5 would elaborate on findings. Chapter 6 would discuss these findings. Chapter 7, as you have it, would wrap up the discussion by highlighting the value added, and new areas of research.

2.3. Areas for Improvement: the use of sources and providing solid backing to other-wise unsubstantiated assertions

A number of unsubstantiated assertions fills in the pages of the thesis. While several of them represent, to a certain extent, commonsensical knowledge, in a PhD thesis, these need to be supported by sources.

Suggestions for revision: Please, browse the entire thesis for instances devoid of sources' indication and address this issue.

2.4. Areas for Improvement: the use of certain terms

I am seriously puzzled by the term “moderate and emerging European Union countries”. Then, there is also the issue of consistency in terminology, especially in the discussion sections.

Suggestion for revision: please, reconsider the use of the term “moderate and emerging European Union countries”. Ensure terminological consistency across chapters. Verify that all citations are properly cross-referenced. Minor typos have been identified.

3. Publication Potential:

High potential, though a lot of work will be needed to streamline the argument and make the research idea explicit and presentable to a sophisticated reader. With minor revisions, segments of the empirical work could be published in journals focused on innovation studies or regional development.