

Research of the Main Methods for Assessing the Competitiveness of Enterprises

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Abstract. Any socio-economic system cannot develop in an environment without competition. Competition drives progress, but to function and develop optimally, an enterprise must have an elevated level of competitiveness. Thus, the chosen topic is relevant. The purpose of this study was to analyse the main methods for assessing the level of competitiveness of an enterprise. The main advantages and disadvantages of the main methods of assessing the level of competitiveness of an enterprise were highlighted. Examples of using SWOT and PEST analysis were presented. It was found that the level of competitiveness of the enterprise should be understood as such a state in which the quality of competitive advantages on the market allows demonstrating a high, medium, or low level of competition. It was also noted that the state of security substantially affects the competitiveness of the enterprise and without effective security mechanisms, high indicators will be problematic to achieve. It was found that competitiveness should be considered as such a level of functional and structural organisation of the enterprise, at which one can discuss the ability to ensure production and sale of products and services at a level sufficient to meet demand and ensure high positions in the market relative to competing producers. The results obtained can be used in the activities of Ukrainian enterprises

Keywords: competition, level of competitiveness, business entity, assessment methods, analysis methods

Introduction

If one considers the issue of preserving and improving the level of competitiveness of enterprises, then the industrial sphere is a particularly critical branch for Ukraine, since it is the key for the modern Ukrainian economy, preserving its vitality in post-pandemic and military conditions.

Several Ukrainian and foreign scientists investigated the major features of assessing the level of competitiveness of an enterprise.

For instance, as most scientists have noted [1-3], the competitive advantage of any company is service, which creates the image of the company, increases profitability and competitive influence in the field of production. To be the first among competitors, one needs to start with themselves, with their company and their production.

Another group of scientists [4-5] also noted that in present-day market, every manufacturer should have a competitive advantage, competitive products, and company activities. Unfortunately, no one is immune from market changes, and any entrepreneur should be prepared to adjust the company's plans, change tactics and new developments. The external environment changes daily, and therefore businesses must have a sustainable operation.

Of interest is the study by L.M. Gitelman, L.D. Gitelman, A.V. Denisov [6], who considered the features of the competitiveness of enterprises and what indicators should

be considered. M. Kopytko et al. [7] considered competition through the lens of innovation. Noting that without innovation, it is impossible to discuss competitiveness. The given study has differences, and they lie in the analysis of methods for assessing the competitiveness of enterprises.

However, the importance of analysing the main methods for assessing the competitiveness of an enterprise, highlighting their positive and negative aspects, stays an unresolved problem.

The purpose of this study was an analysis of the main methods for assessing the level of competitiveness of an enterprise.

The issue of organising a competitive policy of industrial management both at the theoretical level and at the level of practical implementation is a topical issue in all countries of the world. Given the existence of the global crisis, the industrial sector also suffered considerable negative consequences, which forced the world's leading countries to seek ways to overcome these crisis phenomena. The governments of most countries have long realised the fact that the sphere and specifics of the functioning of industrial enterprises have undergone radical changes under the influence of globalisation, the manifestation of the influence of Industry 4.0, the internationalisation of sales markets and local crisis phenomena that have somehow arisen in any economy

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of the world over all these years. Industrial enterprises could no longer effectively fulfil their production potential and develop competitive advantages in the obsolete and static environment of directive management and the unified power of the state regulator. In this regard, in most countries, the issue of analysing and creating a new paradigm of cooperation and management of industrial enterprises has arisen. Thus, most governments of the world have already formed effective strategies for the development and functioning of the industrial sector, which have made it possible to significantly develop the network of industrial enterprises of diverse types of ownership, increase their productivity and competitiveness.

In Ukraine, the issue of industrial development is also an urgent and relevant issue, both in the conceptual and practical sense. To date, Ukrainian industrial enterprises have faced considerable internal and external pressure, which could not but affect their efficiency and competitiveness. The most critical problem faced by Ukrainian enterprises, admittedly, is the impact of active military operations throughout Ukraine.

This paper presents a matrix of SWOT analysis of the Ukrainian industry for 2019-2021, considering the impact of COVID-19, and a matrix of PEST analysis of the Ukrainian industry for 2019-2021, taking into account the impact of COVID-19.

The Essence of Increasing the Level of Competitiveness of the Enterprise

The entire evolutionary development of the phenomenon of competition is usually divided into four stages [1]:

1. The stage of pre-capitalist competition. This stage begins with the end of the primitive communal structure of the world, which was dominated by barter relations and classless society, and the transition to commodity-market relations. The main sign of competition at this stage is its sporadicity, irregularity, and variability.

2. The stage of perfect (free) competition began with the predominance of capitalist relations on the world market and lasted until the 1870s. During this stage, competition extends not only to goods and services, but also to all factors of entrepreneurial activity: employees, real estate, land resources, methods and means of production.

3. The stage of the monopolistic revolution, which dates to the 1870s and ended with the outbreak of World War II. This stage is characterised by the development of competition between production and capital in the context

of powerful and revolutionary shifts in production capacity and the invention of new methods to speed up the production.

4. The stage of innovation competition began with the end of World War II and continues until now. The main difference between the competition of this period is its considerable social orientation and susceptibility to public regulation, with the purpose of supporting antimonopoly policy. After comprehending the importance of preventing the formation of monopolies in the market, given that they constitute a significant factor in destabilising the state and global economy, as well as a factor in inhibiting the development of small businesses, most states have created powerful antimonopoly legislation that largely supported the development of "healthy" competition both within the country and around the world [2-5].

An essential element of the enterprise's competitiveness management system is the level of competitiveness. According to scientists [6-7], it is now customary to distinguish between the following levels of enterprise competitiveness:

Level 1 – the main policy of the enterprise is only to produce products, despite the existing trends in the market, the needs and consumer interests of customers.

Level 2 – the main policy of the enterprise is that the products and services produced by the enterprise must fully correspond to the products and services produced by competing producers.

Level 3 – the company's policy in the field of production and sale of products is no longer based on the trends and views of competing producers since the company itself and its products become "reference" in the market and the company itself dictates the conditions for qualitative and quantitative characteristics of products.

Level 4 – the company's policy is more based not on improving the elements of production, given that it has reached its maximum efficiency, but on the quality of the competitiveness management system and the level of competitiveness, which includes both operational changes in the production system and improvements in sales and marketing policies.

Analysis of the Main Methods for Assessing the Level of Competitiveness of an Enterprise

When managing the competitiveness of an enterprise, an essential place is occupied by determining, evaluating and controlling the level of competitiveness. To assess the level of competitiveness of an enterprise today, there are many general scientific assessment methods, each of which has a number of advantages and disadvantages (Table 1).

Table 1. Advantages and disadvantages of the main methods for assessing the level of competitiveness of an enterprise

Methods and models	Advantages	Disadvantages
PIMS method	The ability to measure the relative quality characteristics of goods and services, as well as attempts to measure the compliance of the production structure at the enterprise with the structure of consumer needs	This model covers only a period of three years. Lack of indicators in the structure of the PIMS model that describe the structures of the enterprise competitiveness management system, management methods and style
McKinsey method (model)	This method is distinguished by its detail and breadth of use, which allows most accurately assessing the level of competitiveness The structure of this method makes provision for variable models of enterprise competitiveness development	A considerable level of subjectivity of the assessment. To conduct this type of assessment, one needs to analyse many indicators

Table 1, Continued

Methods and models	Advantages	Disadvantages
Company model Shell (Shell/DPM model)	The use of qualitative and quantitative indicators in the model structure allows more accurately justifying the chosen competitiveness management strategy. It does not have such a substantial dependence on the statistical relationship between the market share and the level of profit of the enterprise	The indicators used for analysis are conditional and subjective. The structure of this model does not contain criteria for determining the number of indicators that are necessary for a particular enterprise It is difficult to assess the level of importance of each of the indicators
Method of the Boston Consulting Group	Ease of construction, speed in collecting and analysing a small number of indicators, visibility Use of only objective evaluation criteria, which minimises the level of subjectivity in assessing the level of competitiveness	The focus is solely on financial flows and the distribution of investment between products, goods and services provided by the enterprise. The presence of only an approximate estimate of each product, which is conditioned upon the small number of indicators involved in the evaluation. Excessive simplification of the model leads to a deterioration in its accuracy
Point method	The method is clear and implemented without the need for added knowledge of evaluation methods. Determination of the most influential factors in assessing the competitiveness of an enterprise allows finding the strengths and weaknesses of the enterprise	Assessment of the level of competitiveness is subjective. Indicators of the external environment of the enterprise are not considered. The level of competitiveness is assessed using an extremely limited number of indicators
M. Porter's matrix	The assessment considers both external and internal impacts on competitiveness	Preference is given exclusively to one type of strategy, which considerably restricts the enterprise

Source: compiled by the author based on [4]

The PIMS method is a type of competitive advantage assessment method. The PIMS method is used to evaluate all variables that affect the long-term prospects of making a profit for an enterprise. The method itself is based on the use of an empirical model that covers a wide scope of strategic (qualitative and quantitative characteristics of products, market share occupied by the enterprise) and situational (market growth rate, stage of development of the industry in which the enterprise operates) variables. The main purpose of conducting PIMS analysis in the result, after studying the level of competitiveness of the enterprise, is to choose the best strategy for the functioning of the enterprise in the market [8].

Another popular method for assessing the level of competitiveness of an enterprise is the McKinsey model, which includes a matrix with nine divisions to display the most accurate analysis of the functional and organisational activities of the enterprise. The main difference between using this method of assessing competitiveness is that in its structure it includes not only objective indicators of the enterprise's performance, such as sales volumes, profit levels, but also subjective ones, such as human resources, changes in the market structure, etc. The entire structure of the matrix is formed according to two factors: the attractiveness of the market and the competitiveness of the functional division of the enterprise. After entering all the indicators in the matrix, it becomes possible to determine the status of the enterprise in relation to two fundamental factors and the strategy of further activity, which, according to the developers of the McKinsey model, is the most acceptable [9].

The Shell/DPM model is based on a basic two-factor uniformity matrix with nine parts. When using this model, there is a step-by-step assessment of the qualitative and quantitative parameters of the enterprise's activities in the context of ensuring a prominent level of competitiveness in the market. When using this model, after assessing the level of competitiveness in the matrix of quantitative and qualitative indicators, competitiveness management strategies are formed at three levels: corporate, business, and basic-functional [10].

The method of the Boston Consulting Group is currently one of the most simplified methods for assessing the level of competitiveness of an enterprise. This method includes a matrix of four elements and only two variables: relative market share and market growth dynamics. This model allows assessing the level of competitiveness of an individual product or service of an enterprise in relation to the above indicators, and the entire business as a whole. After assessing the level of competitiveness, the model suggests choosing the best strategy for the enterprise [11]. A popular type of assessment of the level of competitiveness is the point method, during which each of the indicators is evaluated according to a certain system of points. Usually, this method is divided into three stages: preparatory, when indicators are selected to assess the level of competitiveness; calculation, at which each indicator is given a certain number of points, and in the next one, the essential (those who received the highest number of points) indicators are determined to ensure a prominent level of competitiveness; recommendation, on which a system of measures is formed to improve the level of competitiveness of the enterprise.

The M. Porter matrix allows assessing the level of competitiveness based on existing competitive advantages and choose the most acceptable competitive strategy according to competitive advantages. According to this model, there are three main strategies for improving the competitiveness of an enterprise: cost leadership, differentiation, and specialisation [12].

Today, the most common method is to assess the level of competitiveness of an enterprise using SWOT and PEST analysis. Considering SWOT analysis in its most general sense, it is a certain tool for strategic planning at the enterprise, which allows describing the real state of the object under study in the most detailed way. The abbreviation “SWOT” stands for four terms: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The use of SWOT analysis allows, during the conduct of such study, comprehensively investigating the

enterprise, its weaknesses, and strengths, competing product manufacturers, and the entire market as a whole.

When conducting SWOT analysis, all factors of the external and internal environment are evaluated, after which the responsible individuals receive a detailed map of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the competitiveness of the enterprise. This allows assessing the level of competitiveness of the enterprise in the most convenient and visual way, which later allows interpreting the results in the shortest possible time and make operational adjustments using the competitiveness management system.

Table 2 is presented to clearly demonstrate the operation of the SWOT analysis of the Ukrainian industry as a method for assessing the competitiveness of the Ukrainian industry under the influence of COVID-19.

Table 2. SWOT analysis of the Ukrainian industry for 2019-2021, considering the impact of COVID-19

Strengths	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low workforce price. 2. Uniqueness of industrial sector products 3. Robotisation of the production in a pandemic. 4. Pricing policy of Ukrainian industrial enterprises. 5. Large volumes of raw materials. 	Opportunities available in the external environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mass vaccination and border opening. 2. Large demand for industrial products on the international market. 3. High purchasing power abroad. 4. Opportunities to attract large investors.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of interest in innovative development. 2. Low investment attractiveness of many industrial enterprises. 3. Inefficient HR management system. 4. Outdated infrastructure. 5. Low demand due to the impact of COVID-19. 6. Low level of competitiveness of Ukrainian industrial enterprises in the external market. 		Threats in the external market

Source: compiled by the author

The next step is PEST analysis, which is the most understandable and detailed way to understand the types of main forces and factors affecting the level of competitiveness of an enterprise. Most often, PEST analysis is used in conjunction with SWOT analysis, as it is an integral element of the risk management system and the formation of competitiveness management strategies. The abbreviation of the

term “PEST” stands for four concepts: Political environment, Economic environment, Socio-cultural environment, Technological environment. PEST analysis involves analysing the main factors for each environment [13-15].

Considering the PEST analysis method as one of the types of competitiveness assessment, it is worth giving an example of its application (Table 3).

Table 3. PEST analysis of the Ukrainian industry for 2019-2021, considering the impact of COVID-19

Political factors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Activation of inflationary development. 2. Lack of a stable exchange rate. 3. Investment unattractiveness of individual industries. 4. Quarantine obstacle to export-import operations for industrial enterprises. 5. Lack of real competition in the internal market 	Economic factors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Military-political conflict with the Russian Federation. 2. Constant decline in political confidence of the population. 3. Introduction of regulations on quarantine restrictions in the activities of enterprises. 4. Political pressure on the privatisation of industrial enterprises
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Table 3, Continued

Socio-cultural factors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inefficient motivation system for industrial enterprises. 2. Lack of a stable exchange rate. 3. Large gap between wages and consumer needs. 4. Low population of professions in industry. 5. Low information support of the industrial sector. 	Technological factors	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Low development of science in the field of industry. 2. Obsolescence of technical means. 3. Low level of application of foreign practices in technological development under the influence of COVID-19. 4. Lack of real competition in the internal market.
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Source: compiled by the author

Notably, over the past period, the impact of COVID-19 has substantially changed the state of activity of industrial enterprises and industry as one of the leading sectors of the economy. That is why PEST analysis is relevant in modern development conditions. Currently, the factors associated with COVID-19 and the consequences of its impact are coming to the fore. This only confirms the thesis about the relevance and necessity of conducting a thorough analysis of the state of competitiveness of industrial enterprises in Ukraine.

Conclusions

In summary, improving the financial stability and competitiveness of enterprises is a priority task of the state, especially in the context of the coronavirus pandemic. Effective functioning of enterprises is aimed at ensuring sustainable development of the region. Solving the problems of enterprise development is impossible without applying innovative approaches to management, its further professionalisation, i.e., in such a construction of a management organisation that is focused on management professionalism.

The key aspect of increasing the level of competitiveness of an enterprise using security mechanisms should be an effective methodological approach that should consider modern development conditions. A matrix of SWOT analysis of the Ukrainian industry for 2019-2021 was formed, considering the impact of COVID-19. It was established that one of the weaknesses is the low level of competitiveness of Ukrainian industrial enterprises in the external market.

The authors of this study formed a PEST analysis matrix of the Ukrainian industry for 2019-2021, considering the impact of COVID-19. As a result, it was found that in the context of a pandemic, the top priority should be to respond to the factors associated with COVID-19 and the consequences of its impact. The conducted research of the main methods for assessing the level of competitiveness of an enterprise has shown that each of the methods has several disadvantages and cannot be effectively implemented in Ukrainian practice. Therefore, further research requires the development of a proper methodological approach to improving the level of competitiveness of the enterprise using security mechanisms.

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Дослідження основних методів оцінювання конкурентоспроможності підприємств

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Анотація. Будь-яка соціально-економічна система не може розвиватись в середовищі без конкуренції. Конкуренція рухає прогрес, але для того, щоб оптимально функціонувати та розвиватись, підприємство повинно мати високий рівень конкурентоспроможності. Таким чином обрана тематика є актуальною. З огляду на це, метою дослідження є аналіз основних методів оцінювання рівня конкурентоспроможності підприємства. Виділено основні переваги та недоліки основних методів оцінювання рівня конкурентоспроможності підприємства. Представлено приклади застосування SWOT- і PEST-аналізу. Визначено, що під рівнем конкурентоспроможності підприємства слід розуміти такий стан, за якого якість конкурентних переваг на ринку дозволяє демонструвати високий, середній або ж низький рівень конкуренції. Також наголошено, що стан безпеки суттєво впливає на рівень конкурентоспроможності підприємства і без дієвих безпекових механізмів високі показники буде досягнути проблематично. Визначено, що конкурентоспроможність варто розглядати як такий рівень функціональної та структурної організації підприємства, за якого можна говорити про можливість забезпечити процес виробництва та реалізації продукції та послуг на рівні, достатньому для задоволення попиту й забезпечення високих позицій на ринку щодо конкуруючих товаровиробників. Отримані результати можуть бути використані в діяльності українських підприємств

Ключові слова: конкуренція, рівень конкурентоспроможності, суб'єкт господарювання, методи оцінювання, методи аналізу