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FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
UNIVERSITY OF SOFIA "ST. KLIMENT OHRIDSKI"

Review

from Assoc. Prof. Angelina Miroslavova Markovska, Ph.D.
Veliko Turnovo University "ST. st. CYRIL AND METHODIUS"
of the Dissertation of

Brazioti V. Aristeia

***“Relationship between motivation and work conditions as crucial topic
in Human Resources management in the public sector”*** Submitted for
obtaining the Doctorate degree (PhD)
Code 3.3 "Political Sciences", specialty "Public Administration"

1. Information about the procedure, the dissertation, avtoreferat and the publications:

From the submitted documents and materials it can be stated that no violations of the procedure for acquiring the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" have been committed. In general, the dissertation meets the requirements of Art. 6, para. 3 of the Law on the development of academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria.

The Ph.D. student has researched a thoroughly broad set of available sources and literature related to her chosen topic. Proof of her profound theoretical knowledge in the field of public administration's management and its better orientation in the available analytical literature are correctly cited in 149 theoretical studies, monographs, books, studies, articles and internet sources mainly in English and Greek languages. The theoretical problems and the ones covered in the thesis are correctly presented. Avtoreferat of the dissertation correctly reflects the subject and the object, purpose and objectives, structure, and obtained main results of the thesis. The dissertation has realized 3 scientific publications on the topic of its research, two of which have been published in a collection of participation in an international scientific conference, and 1 in a scientific journal.

2. Relevance and significance of the research problem

The dissertation of Aristeia Brazioti presented to the attention of the distinguished jury features the relevance of the researched problem and its significance in times of severe socio-economic crisis, caused by many internal and external factors of local, regional, national, and supranational levels. The dissertation focuses on the relationship between working conditions and motivation of public sector employees, as a prerequisite for higher efficiency in the provision of public services and in particular as a significant factor, I would say a "measure" of good and strategic human resource management. Considering the value of the human factor to achieve the above goal, a significant part of the reform effort must focus on the valuable tool of staff motivation.

In my opinion, the originality and innovation of the proposed dissertation research consist mainly in the professionally conducted, processed, and analyzed field study of the factors influencing the level of motivation of those involved in the public sector, and specifically the factor of working conditions, problem areas and formulating a series of measures to improve and implement good management strategies related to people management in order to improve the efficiency of the provided public services and the efficiency of the functioning public institutions.

The relevance of the study is supplemented by the belated or, more precisely, did not happen transition in public administration from the outdated bureaucratic system to a modern management model focused on efficiency and effectiveness, with the objective of providing integrated, quality services to citizens and increasing their participation in decision-making processes regarding public policies.

The detailed outlined problem areas of the study are a kind of snapshot not only of the current the socio-economic and political situation in the Greek state and in particular in the Greek public administration, but I would say it is largely an analogy of the Bulgarian reality, which gives the results high added value in terms of their feasibility on a supranational scale. Under this scope, the objective of this study will be to provide a contribution to knowledge in the relationship of motivation with work conditions in the public sector. That formulates the the first major contribution of the dissertation.

3. General information for the dissertation

The dissertation consists of 192 standard pages, including an introduction, 5 chapters, and bibliography with 141 sources. In support of the analysis, 36 tables, and 33 figures are given. The topic of the research is correctly and precisely formulated, as each of its components finds a subsequent expansion in the general composition of the text.

Mrs. Brasiotti uses a strong interdisciplinary approach, including methodological tools used in various scientific fields, such as sociology, public administration, and management, economics, political science, psychology, etc. In particular, she pays attention to two types of motivation: internal and external. The first is related to the internal impulse to work, the pleasure that the individual enjoys by providing his work. External stimulation is linked to the rewards enjoyed by the worker from the achievement of his work. This thesis was prepared primarily to demonstrate whether and to what extent the hygiene factors that civil servants face in their daily work environment affect the perceived meaning of their motivation.

The object of the thesis is to examine and analyze the concept of "motivation" and its interaction with the variable of working conditions in the public sector, such as the relationship between workers and supervisors, the relationship workers have with their work, and the relationship between workers and their colleagues.

The structure of the dissertation follows the logic of the research, consisting conditionally of two classical parts: theoretical-research (covering 1-3 chapters) and practical-applied (chapters 4-5). The research was based on the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which proposes a multidimensional analysis of work motivations combining both internal and external mechanisms of behavior regulation. In addition, the case study research strategy was adopted. The survey refers to the Administrative Staff as well as the Technical Staff working in the Region of Thessaly and particularly in four cities: Volos, Larissa, Trikala and Karditsa.

In addition, the purpose of the empirical research is both to examine with quantitative data the effect and contribution of each variable of the working environment and the intensity of the interaction with the endogenous and exogenous forms of motivation of public employees. The empirical the study depicts whether the various forms of motivation exert the same effect on employees with different demographics and backgrounds. Data analysis also explore how the factors that constitute the variable of working conditions affect and influence the motivation of each civil servant individually, taking into account the demographic characteristics of each. In addition, the interaction of the different forms of motivation that take place in each the employee is extensively studied, taking into account the individual characteristics of each respondent.

The questionnaire of the survey consists of three main sections, in which the author of the dissertation has demonstrated his ability to structure questionnaires for

reliable field research and especially to process and analyze data and draw conclusions based on serious theoretical and empirical argumentation.

- The first section of the questionnaire depicts demographic characteristics;
- The second section aims to collect data on employee motivation, applying Multi factorial Scale of Work Incentives;
- The third section of the questionnaire aims at the factors that make up working conditions, precisely at the hygiene factors according to Herzberg's Two-Factor theory.

This part consists of six subscales measuring Company Policy Relationship with Peers, Work Security, Relationship with Supervisor, Money (2 questions) and Working Conditions where responses were recorded on a seven-point Likert scale from. The data were analyzed using standard statistical methods

One of the merits of the work is that the author does not commit herself in advance to a specific and narrowly formulated hypothesis, but rather by induction tests in the field a series of assumptions, consistently confirming or rejecting them, and on that basis logically formulates conclusions, statement and recommendations.

The introduction outlines the problem areas of the research, as justified and the motive that provoked the research interest. The parameters within the author will operate and develop her thesis are set, and the differences in the motivation of the employees in the private and public sphere are correctly indicated. In this sense, the author states his claim to fill the gap in the research field in terms of insufficient in-depth quantitative and qualitative research on indicators derived from the work environment, which forms the motivation of employees in public institutions.

The first chapter is entitled "Motivation" and has a strong theoretical and informative focus. Within three subparagraphs Ms. Brazioti unfolds logical statement following the established framework of the definition of the term "motivation", the mechanisms for its the formation, and briefly presents 9 fundamental theories of motivation from different fields of scientific knowledge, categorized into two main groups: the theories concerning the nature of the motivation (content theories) and the process theories. Emphasis is placed on the key importance of motivators as agents of the motivation process, distinguishing them into primary and secondary. In my opinion, the definition to which the author will adhere in the course of her research, as well as the priority that will be given to the primary or secondary motivators, should have been clearly emphasized here. I find the merits of the first chapter in the critical reading of the considered theories, as well as in the attempt for comparative and comparative analysis between them, such as between Maslow 's theory and Herzberg's theory (p. 23) and the provision of

the necessary tools of staff motivation, considering the utilization of employees' skills in order to improve their productivity and efficiency so as to create competitive advantages for the organization.

The second chapter focuses the research interest on the so-called intrinsic and extrinsic factors, or motivators, and the importance of working conditions in the evaluation scale. I find the contribution here in the attempt to present and reveal the close relationship between the so-called intrinsic factors for motivation of the public sector workers, in the case of various Greece hospitals. Public sector employees' perception for their managers' support for growth, competence, and autonomy, would increase their internal motivation. In contrast, extrinsic motivations can only temporarily benefit an organization, as it has been shown to have a negative long-term impact. In the third subparagraph, the attention turns not only to the physical dimensions of working conditions but also to those related to the social environment but also to employees' behaviors. Working conditions are examined in the light of the building and logistics infrastructure, from one side and work environment, from the other. In my opinion, the second part presented the conceptual framework, on which the formulation of the hypotheses that will follow in the research part of the work is based.

The third chapter already narrows the research field to the subject of the dissertation itself, namely the motivation of employees in the public sector. An overview of key research has been made, which have been conducted in the wider public sector (Baldwin, Crewson, Perry & Wise, Alonso and Lewis and etc.). The author of the dissertation demonstrates in-depth knowledge of both the historical chronology of the crisis in the Greek public sphere and the theoretical basis of the problem, which allows him to professionally and competently apply the derived theoretical models to the state of the Greek state administration and to make conclusions regarding its effectiveness and efficiency, as well as features in comparison with other state institutions.

Chapters four and five have a strong practical and applied orientation and have a significant contribution character. Within 40 pages the objectives, methodology, and results of the conducted field research are duly described and supported with the necessary statistical requisites, in order to investigate the relationship between public employees' motivation and working conditions in their work environment. The design of the research process involves the design of the questionnaire, the determination of the population and sample of the research, the data collection process, and the methods of analysis of the results. I fully accept the

chosen research technique and used sociological tools. In its application, the professionalism and good preparation of Mrs. Brazioti are demonstrated.

4. Evaluation of the scientific-applied results and contributions of the dissertation

Although there are no explicit formulated author contributions on the topic of the dissertation, within the framework of the conducted and summarized researches on the topic of the dissertation, I can highlight the following more important and significant contribution:

- 1) A model of best practice for efficient and effective HRM in public sector is created, concerning the relationship between motivation and working conditions in the Greek public in terms of final results. This could be used for further comparative analysis between different national public service systems in Europe.
- 2) Formulation, proving and proposing a working mechanism for constant quantitative and qualitative measurements of the degree of motivation and satisfaction of employees in public institutions as a prerequisite for sustainable development in the field of public administration and the operational goals of public institutions.
- 3) Enriching the scientific literature with the development of a structural model that supports the positive impact of measuring management actions, as well as the use of surveys to promote an organizational culture for change and innovation in the field of public services.
- 4) Properly and correctly collected, analyzed and summarized quantitative and qualitative data can serve as valuable information and foundation for effective leadership of a new type, oriented towards the imposition of new cultural and value models of behavior within organizations, as well as follow-up strategic planning.

5. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no formal reason to make critical remarks on the peer-reviewed dissertation, because they would be the result of my analysis and opinion on the issues under consideration. However, I will note some of my critical observations, which should rather be accepted as guidelines in terms of refining and enriching the dissertation research:

1. There is a certain fragmentation in terms of content, which in my opinion, is due to the lack of logically made relationships between the different chapters.
2. There is no clearly formulated research hypothesis, which, although is indirectly captured in the course of the exposition, complicates, in my opinion, the research

task and, above all, the objective formulation of the conclusions made in the course of the research.

3. I think that formulating a conclusion and the author's self-assessment of the contributions would only help to more clearly define the author's position on the issue.

I would like to give and a suggestion of Mrs. Aristeia Brazioti in her possible future research on the subject in a relatively European aspect, to include in her theoretical framework and **Hofstede's** cultural **dimensions** theory as a framework for cross-cultural communication.

6. Assessment of the dissertation

The dissertation of Aristeia **Brazioti** "*Relationship between motivation and work conditions as crucial topic in Human Resources management in the public sector*" contains research contributions of significant scientific, methodological and practical value and fully complies with the requirements for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor".

I give a positive assessment and recommend to the honorable jury **to award Aristeia V. Brazioti the educational and scientific degree "Doctor of Political Science" in a professional field 3.3. Political Sciences (specialty "Public Administration"**

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