

## **REVIEW**

of the dissertation

for awarding **the educational and scientific degree "Doctor"**

in the scientific area **3.3. "Political Science (Public Administration)"**

**Author of the dissertation:** Aristeia Brazioti

**Thesis theme: "Relationship between motivation and work conditions as crucial topic in Human Resources management in the public sector"**

**Reviewer:** assoc. prof. Elena Kalfova, PhD

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### 1. Overall assessment of the dissertation

From a formal point of view Aristeia Brazioti's doctoral thesis research "Relationship between motivation and work conditions as crucial topic in Human Resources management in the public sector" meets all quantitative and qualitative criteria for dissertation for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor".

The presented paper has a total volume of 192 pages, organized in 5 chapters, an introduction, a conclusion and 2 appendices. The structure is relevant and allows for presentation of the doctoral thesis research. The doctoral thesis is developed on the basis of representative scientific literature - a sufficient number of sources have been used, representing the current scientific achievements in the field. The quotations made are compatible with the fair practice and contribute to achieving the goals of the doctoral thesis.

The structure of the doctoral thesis conforms to the standards of the genre. The Introduction clearly defines the object and subject of the research, the goals, tasks, methods of the research. The framework of analysis thus constructed is logical, coherent, the goal is ambitious and addresses current issues of the development of public administration, human resources management in the public sector, with special emphasis on the importance of working conditions for motivating employees. The author sets herself the ambitious and very interesting from a scientific and scientific-applied point of view goal to revile the extent to which working conditions affect the motivation of employees in public administration. In addition, the author expands the analysis by setting an additional goal - to explore the specific importance of each of the factors of the work environment on employee motivation by making a clear distinction between exogenous and endogenous factors. The author successfully copes with the achievement of these goals, and the results could be very useful for creating specific management approaches to increase employee motivation.

The formulation of research hypotheses, which are tested in the process of analysis, is illustrative of a very good research culture. The research hypotheses are based on the adopted methodology and correspond to the three main directions of research. The first group of tested hypotheses is related to the direct influence of work environment factors on employee motivation, the second - to the relationship between the various forms of motivation is investigated, as they are analysed and presented in the individual subcategories, which arise after the endogenous and exogenous processes of the individual, according to the Self-Determination Theory, and the third - the effect of demographics on each of their individual dimensions that compose motivation and working conditions is examined. The testing of these research hypotheses was done through a systematic, consistent study. The author develops and proves the thesis that working conditions are essential for the motivation for work of public

administration employees. In addition, the specifics of this process in relation to different social and demographic groups are derived and the different motivation types are delimited.

The first chapter clarifies the basic concepts and methodological approaches that the author uses in proving her doctoral thesis. At the theoretical level, the concepts of motivation and working conditions are derived. The main theoretical concepts of motivation and their development in recent decades are analysed in detail. The author also connects the motivational approaches with the approaches for increasing the productivity and efficiency of the employees and respectively - with the creation of competitive advantages for the organization. Chapter Two expands the theoretical basis by analysing the various motivational factors. The systematization of the motivational factors is made in two groups - internal and external, economic and non-economic, etc. The connections between the individual motivating factors and the behaviour are derived. The concept of working conditions is defined in detail. A consistent theoretical basis has been built, on the basis of which the research hypotheses are derived. The third chapter examines the specifics of the motivational process in the public sector. The author discusses the possibilities for transferring theoretical concepts developed on the basis of research in the private sector to the public administration. The author accepts the thesis that they are applicable, but it is necessary to keep in mind some specifics of public administration. The main one is the influence of the political system on the administration and the specific process of regulation of the sector. Chapters four present the methodology and the results of the empirical study. The methodology of the empirical research is developed in great detail. The specifics of different empirical methods are discussed. The choice of the method of data collection – questionnaires, and the data processing methodology – regression models, bivariate and multivariate are explained. The author made an in-depth analysis of the data collected from the empirical study. The author demonstrates a very high level of knowledge of different data processing methods. They are selected appropriately in terms of the objectives of

the study and the type of data collected. The connections between different demographic characteristics (gender, age, etc.) and social characteristics (for example: level of education) and the level of influence of the factors of the work environment on the motivation of the individual groups are presented in detail. The factors that determine the motivation of the employees as well the opportunities to increase their motivation are formulated. The recommendations formulated for improving human resource management practices, especially the specific recommendations for improving management approaches to increase the motivation of public sector employees and the proposed innovative ones, can be very useful.

My overall assessment of the doctoral thesis is positive. A complete and defensible text, which is the result of consistent and focused effort, is presented. The author has undertaken significant work of good quality to identify, review and analyse a significant body of information sources. Current and important questions are raised about public administration development, about the need for specific approaches to managing efficiency in public administration, about the importance of working conditions to increase the motivation of employees in administration. I fully share the author's understanding that the classical models for increasing motivation in public administration have their own specifics, respectively - it is necessary to adapt existing models (developed mainly on the experience of the private sector) according to these specifics. The author also defends the thesis that in the general theoretical framework of motivational factors, working conditions have an important place. In this aspect of the study, the author again brings out some specifics of the public sector.

The dissertation uses a classical deductive analysis approach. Raising theoretically the questions of motivational processes and the importance of working conditions, the author analyses the relationship between the two processes. The results of the conducted empirical research clearly show the significant field work carried out. The survey was conducted only in one region of Greece, but due to its enviably good methodology it can be applied in other

regions. It is a pilot study by nature, which can underpin the formulation of more in-depth hypotheses and research questions at a later stage. The data collected provide significantly greater opportunities for more in-depth analyses in the future. The doctoral thesis research carried out proves that the author has competencies for conducting scientific research: she demonstrates in-depth knowledge of theoretical paradigms and very good skills for conducting empirical research, as well as for analysing scientific facts.

## 2. Relevance

The issues analysed in the doctoral thesis are simultaneously relevant in several areas: for the practices of public administration, for the problems related to the management of the motivational processes in public administration and the factors on which they depend and, to my mind, of particular importance is the question of how to improve the efficiency of public administration. This is one of the hot topics in public administration research. Very interesting and of significant scientific and applied importance is the way in which the doctoral student connects the motivation management systems with the approaches for increasing the overall efficiency of the functioning of the public administration. Of course, this common problem raises many questions and various possible aspects of scientific analysis. The doctoral thesis does not pretend to and cannot address all these problems at once. It is a very good study of the importance of working conditions for the motivation of employees in public administration, the importance of employee motivation in terms of the effectiveness of the organization. This provides a good basis for general conclusions and especially for future research, especially with regard to the interrelated motivation of employees - the effectiveness of the organization.

## 3. Qualities of the methodology

The methodology used in the doctoral thesis research is suited for the subject analysed. It consists basically of two components: analysis and synthesis of existing scientific research and empirical research. The methodology is properly implemented, the data collected from the

empirical study are analysed with appropriate methods. The results of the empirical study are appropriately summarised and serve as a basis for the formulated recommendations for change.

#### 4. Scientific and Applied Contributions

I accept the contributions formulated by the author and believe that they are the result of her independent work. In my opinion, Aristeia Brazioti has successfully attained the objectives set in the doctoral thesis research and has managed to prove to a significant degree the theses defended. The contributions of the dissertation include systematization of scientific research in the field of employee motivation, the ways of applying theoretical concepts in practice. The concepts of the influence of the working conditions are analysed and a logically consistent framework for the analysis of their influence on the motivation of the employees in the public administration is developed. In addition, the specifics regarding the motivational processes and the influence of the working conditions in the public administration are presented. This, as I have already emphasized, is one of the most significant contributions of the dissertation research. Very interesting is the empirical study, which identifies the factors that are most important for the motivation of employees in public administration. The significance of the individual factors is systematized in terms of the type of motivation and the type of factors analysed. The development of systematic management approaches to increase the motivation of public administration employees, based on innovative approaches that consider the importance of individual motivational factors is a significant contribution. This analysis could be very useful for public institution.

#### 5. Personal contribution.

The dissertation, the results and the contributions received are a personal contribution of Aristeia Brazioti – they are result of significant amount of work done by the PhD student.

#### 6. Evaluation of publications.

Aristea Brazioti presents 3 articles related to the topic of her dissertation. The publications are in English and have been published in prestigious journals. This is a proven track that the necessary publicity of the research process in relation to the issues under consideration has been fulfilled. Quality of the papers is at the required level and corresponds to the good achievements in the research field.

#### 7. Autoreferat

The dissertation abstract has a volume of 21 pages and presents a synthesized content of the dissertation. It is fully compliant with the Act for Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria. The abstract is developed appropriately so that it gives a complete and accurate idea of the main topics and achievements of the dissertation.

#### 8. Considerations, questions and recommendations

The doctoral thesis, like any in-depth study, raises some questions and provokes some observations. The doctoral student examines the management of employee motivation and the importance of working conditions through the prism of the overall approach to improving the efficiency of the organization. In my opinion, this is a completely relevant and appropriate point of view. However, it is not part of the empirical study. This is not mandatory, but it would contribute to expanding the scope and relevance of the results and allow for future research. In this line of thought, I would like to ask the following question:

Which of the proposed management approaches to increase the motivation of employees in public administration can most influence the effectiveness of the organization?

The doctoral student has repeatedly noted that the theory and practice of motivation management is based mainly on research on the private sector. In this case, is private sector practice being adapted to the specifics of public administration in Greece? If so, what are the main differences and what are the main difficulties in applying these practices?

#### 9. Conclusion

The doctoral thesis discussed clearly speaks of the research competence of its author. Given the advantages of the doctoral thesis research, I give my vote "for" awarding its author - Aristeia Brazioti, the scientific degree "Doctor" in the professional field 3.3. "Political Science (Public Administration)".

23.06.2021

Reviewer:

assoc. prof. Elena Kalfova, PhD