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FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY
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Review

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

***“The quality of public administration in relation to the leadership efficiency:
impact on satisfaction and efficiency of Human Resources.”***

Submitted for obtaining the Doctorate degree (PhD)
Code 3.3 "Political Sciences", specialty "Public Administration"

Relevance and significance of the research problem

The dissertation of Mr. Konstantinidis presented to the attention of the honorable jury is a widespread and thorough study of the current and still unresolved issues related to public administration reforms, problems with effective and efficient modern management model in public structures, institutions and the promotion of a new type of philosophy and organizational culture.

Approaching inductively the special case of the public hospital in the Greek city of Serres, limited to the specific area of nursing care, Mr. Konstantinidis draws up a model of good practice and mainly offers tools through which it can be applied in other areas of public health, in other public institutions, as well as in other geographical areas not only on the territory of Greece, but also in Bulgaria.

In my opinion, the originality and innovation of the doctoral thesis lies mainly in the parallel conducted survey of perceptions and the degree of satisfaction of the key stakeholders in the field of health care, in order to identify problem areas and formulate measures for improvement and application of good management practices in order to build a reliable and equitable model of a functional public institution.

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study is supplemented by the belated or, more precisely, did not happen transition in public administration from the outdated bureaucratic system to a modern management model focused on efficiency and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.

General information about the dissertation.

The doctoral thesis is in a volume of 207 pages, including: 181 pages of active text, supplemented by a summary, an introduction, conclusion, wide bibliography and precisely designed applications visualizing questionnaires used for the empirical study.

Structurally, the architecture of the study is classical, as the exposure is consistently and logically located within seven problem chapters to the presentation and analysis of the so-called "soft elements" of the health care system and in particular: human resources and the type of leadership, administrative procedures and the general level of culture in the context of hospital care in Greece and specifically in the hospital in the city of Serres.

I find the choice of health care facility to conduct the empirical study extremely appropriate, as for its purely structural and operational characteristics, the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the situation in the hospital in Serres can lay claim to universality, validity and therefore a reliable model of good practice.

Linking the public management in the maintenance of a hospital with the quality of the distributed health service and especially as a proportional projection of the level of a common organizational culture inside and outside the hospital demonstrates erudition, depth and above all qualified knowledge of laws and algorithms of public management, human resource management and organizational culture. In this sense, I define the methodology used by the Ph.D student as interdisciplinary, crossing several areas in the field of philosophical, social and political sciences.

Subordinating the general idea of the dissertation to the philosophical-value concept for understanding the behavior, leadership, structure and human resources in the health care system, brings semantic and meaningful research to a higher thematic level, successfully fulfilling, in my opinion, the task to give a purely human, I would say humane appearance of the processes taking place in the field of public management, beyond the strict and rational operationalization. Management planning in the provision of health services is absolutely essential, and the planning process depends on the identification of organizational goals regarding the applied procedures, staff motivation and rational allocation of all available resources.

The characteristics of the organizational culture in public institutions (in this case a public hospital) is a mini-expression of the dominant culture in the field of public administration and can be accepted as a metaphor for the national culture. Therefore, substantial administrative reforms begin with a change of culture at the national and political level and only under this condition they can cover various public institutions. Without a change in the organizational culture of the nation, a satisfactory transformation in the direction of quality and efficiency of the services offered by public institutions cannot be achieved.

In the Introduction, the Ph.D. student accurately defines the subject, the object of his research, formulates hypotheses (6 in total), sets goals, which he successfully achieves with an adequately selected scientific methodology.

The object of the dissertation is effective leadership and its impact on human resource efficiency. **The subject** is related to measuring the management and organizational procedures as a prerequisite for the satisfaction of hospital staff in the city of Serres and the consumers - patients.

Within the framework of the dissertation, Mr. Konstantinidis sets **two key goals**, which I state he has successfully achieved, namely: **firstly**, to examine whether the organization (in this case a public hospital) is taking the necessary actions so that the management can collect the necessary data and to promote a culture of accountability and lifelong learning in the provision of health services; **secondly**, to examine whether through dissemination of such organizational culture, leaders can develop a philosophy and mentality that encourages the continuous improvement of procedures. As a result of the theoretical and empirical research, the Ph.D. student argues that a successful leader, in this case a management team of any organization, whether it is private or public, must cultivate and possess the ability to act outside existing cultural boundaries in order to create and imposing a new innovative context of continuous improvement and active involvement of staff in current management decisions

The second layer of the empirical research focuses primarily on the quality of health care provided by nurses, due to their great impact on both internal and external hospital environment, as well as due to the close contact of medical staff with patients, as a prerequisite for measuring the degree of satisfaction of the latter with the received health care.

Primary data were collected using a questionnaire based on a six-point Likert scale, which allows the application of econometric techniques in revealing the relationship between the assessment of organizational procedures with the perceptions of nursing staff and patient satisfaction, and the lack of dependence

between the satisfaction of the medical staff with the presumed satisfaction of the patient. In this sense, the dissertation also performs a prognostic function, in order to outline future trends in the field of health care.

The structure of the research is built on the consistent formulation, analysis and testing of **6 working hypotheses**:

- **Hypothesis 1** is that the continuous improvement of organizational procedures significantly affects the positive perceptions of medical staff;
- **Hypothesis 2** is that procedures oriented towards providing services to citizens / patients significantly affect the level of satisfaction of medical staff with regard to the hospital management;
- **Hypothesis 3** is that management planning is a key leadership factor that significantly influences the positive perceptions of medical staff about the hospital;
- **Hypothesis 4** is that the promotion of policies related to the development of professional skills significantly affects the satisfaction of medical staff with regard to hospital management;
- **Hypothesis 5** is that favoring the organizational culture of lifelong learning has a positive effect on the perceptions of medical staff about the hospital;
- **Hypothesis 6** addresses the question whether there is a significant proportional relationship between the degree of satisfaction of nursing staff and patient satisfaction.

Approbation, proving, or rejecting research hypotheses involves four levels of analysis presented and controlled in four independent mini-studies.

In this sense, the first four chapters of the dissertation are primarily with a theoretical focus, subject to the original scientific statement that public institutions (public organizations) are more than just a collection of a group of individuals - they include people, systems, procedures, previous experience or in another way, they represent a symbiosis between a leader, an organization and an organizational culture.

The focus in the first chapter is on the specifics of leadership, leadership strategies and leadership styles in search of the most effective in terms of end-user satisfaction benefiting from the common good provided by public organizations / institutions.

The second chapter addresses the theoretical formulations related to the organizational culture of lifelong learning, as well as the problem-oriented culture.

Chapters three and four specify the thesis, fitting it into the narrower framework of the "Greek case study" - namely the selection of staff in the Greek public administration (and specifically in the field of health care), its condition, basic characteristics, patterns, criteria evaluation system and current problems.

The theoretical part of the dissertation supports the thesis that the role of effective leadership is to approach management through a combination of factors such as emotional intelligence, collective effort and identification of new resources, emancipated from political interests and external (for the system) influence.

Chapters five and six emphasized the practical-applied focus. The purpose of the empirical study is to examine whether the organization (in this case the public hospital in Serres) takes the necessary actions to improve the management and organizational processes in the hospital by creating a strategic management system that connects the object and nature of work with the organizational structure.

At the second thematic level, the empirical study sheds light on whether the general goal of the necessary health care reforms is related to simplification of procedures, transparency, meritocratic selection and hierarchical promotion, development of knowledge and skills (organizational training) based on specific functions and obligations. Finally, it is examined whether there are tendencies to link the high quality of patient care in public hospitals / respectively public institutions with high ethical standards and good management.

The methodological approach adopted in the fifth and sixth chapters enables all stakeholders - members of the hospital staff (management staff, department heads and available service staff), as well as the users of health services - namely patients, to express their attitudes towards the condition and management of the hospital, the effectiveness of the organizational and administrative procedures followed, the adopted organizational culture at the workplace.

The application of the approach and tools of the "case study" enables the PhD student to examine in depth the compositional variables, comparing them with the answers obtained through surveys and interviews with various groups.

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

Within the framework of the conducted and summarized four mini-researches on the topic of the dissertation, I can highlight the following more important and significant contribution:

1) A model of best practice for management of a public hospital is described and analyzed in detail, as general principles for efficiency and high quality of the offered health care, based mostly on a new type of organizational culture of participation and lifelong learning and simplification of administrative procedures.

- 2) Originality of the dissertation in terms of the conducted parallel survey of perceptions and satisfaction of key stakeholders in order to find problem areas that need measures to improve with emphasis on applied best management practices, as well as to build a reliable and a working model of an effective public organization in terms of final results.
- 3) Formulation, proving and proposing a working mechanism for constant quantitative and qualitative measurements of the degree of satisfaction of employees in public institutions / in particular hospitals and their clients / patients, as a prerequisite for sustainable development in the field of public administration and strategic and the operational goals of public institutions.
- 4) Enriching the scientific literature with the development and control 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.
- 5) 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.

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.

Assessment of the dissertation

I give a positive assessment and recommend to the honorable jury **to award Konstantinidis A. Ilias the educational and scientific degree "Doctor of Political Science"** in a professional field 3.3. Political Sciences.

Date: 17.08.2020

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