

OPINION

From Prof. DSc. Douhomir Vladimirov Minev

Subject: Dissertation work for acquiring the scientific and educational degree "Doctor" in professional field 3.3. "Political Science", specialty "Public Administration", on the topic: "Relationship between motivation and work conditions as a crucial topic in Human Resources management in the public sector" by Aristeia Brazioti

Grounds for presenting the opinion: participation in the composition of the scientific jury for the defense of the dissertation, according to Order № RD 38-243 / 17.05.2021 of the Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

Aristeia Brazioti is a full-time doctoral student in paid education in Public Administration.

The presented work consists of an Introduction, five chapters and appendices in a total volume of 167 pages. The objective of the study is to contribute to the knowledge about the relationship between motivation and work conditions in the public sector by investigating the degree of motivation in the Sector, and the impact of each component of the working environment. In addition, the study proposes a set of measures to improve the motivation of public sector employees by managing working conditions.

Impressive is the good construction of the study, expressed in the strict logic that the presentation follows, the comprehensiveness of the analysis, which did not miss significant components of the selected problem field, precision and attention to detail.

The first chapter is devoted to the definition of motivation, motivation process and review of basic theories of motivation. In my opinion, this part presents all the more significant theoretical constructions related to motivation. It should be noted that the presentation of the theories includes the more important criticisms of them.

The second chapter discusses motivation factors. The logical line of the dissertation is followed by the special focus on one of the factors of motivation, namely - working conditions.

The third chapter discusses the specifics of the public sector and the motivation of employees in the sector. Thus the risk of a quick and mechanical transition to the motivation of employees in the public sector is avoided. The author shows that the sector's specificity is

significant, that she is well informed on this issue. It is quite logical to pay even more attention to the specifics of the public sector in Greece.

The fourth chapter presents an accurate empirical study of the motivation of public sector employees. The following are indicated: the purpose of the research hypotheses; the sample; a questionnaire that is accompanied - I want to emphasize this - by discussing its reliability and validity; a wide range of tools has been used to analyse the data and the results of the analysis.

The study concludes with Proposals for the Public Management on Motivation methods and techniques in the public sector. After these proposals, the possibilities for their practical use are discussed, indicating the limitations of research primary data.

Evaluation of results

The studied problem - the specifics of the public sector and the motivation of its employees is very relevant not only for Greece but also for many other countries, including Bulgaria. Almost everywhere the public sector is characterized by stable employment relations, interference by political parties and political discrimination; significant deficiencies, such as corruption, the recruitment of excessive staff, the misuse of human resources, the lack of accountability. "Managers seem to be more concerned with the quality of their relationship with politicians and with their internal interpersonal issues than with their performance, their subordinates, or the citizens." As the study suggests the same is true for the employees in the public sector - they are also much more interested in the relationship with their superiors and the dominant political forces.

One of the consequences (well known in Bulgaria) is distorted selection of individuals for positions in the public sector and appointments of incompetent employees (the so called ladybugs)

In my opinion, the study goes beyond the problematic area of motivation of public sector employees and sheds light on another serious social and economic problem - corruption. I mean the thesis that people whose motivation is low or who are driven by endogenous factors are more likely to pursue their individual business goals. This is related to Robert Mitchell's thesis about the tendency of some social organizational structures to function in the private interest and to form oligarchic structures.

I think that an important, and, in my opinion, a fruitful moment in the work is the attention paid to the influence of two factors of motivation - the specifics of the public sector and the wider socio-economic context. This seems to be important because most motivation researches focus on

motivational factors within an organizational structure. This is understandable, because these factors are subject to the influence of managers. But this ignores the influence of the two mentioned factors, and it can be quite strong. And it is precisely this influence that is difficult to change, which limits the opportunities for improving the motivation of public sector employees.

It is obvious, for example, that with the described characteristics of the public sector, internal organizational measures can hardly improve the motivation of employees. It is also clear that the importance of the workplace and the salaries received by public sector employees increase significantly with the deterioration of the private sector - high unemployment rate, stagnant incomes, growing poverty.

I find another result interesting – the extensive review of research in the area shows production of contradictory knowledge, which is an example of the politicization of knowledge, emphasized by W. Beck and other risk researchers.

The autoreferat adequately reflects the content of the dissertation and the results obtained.

Notes

I could not understand why only the physical dimensions are considered when considering working conditions (Chapter 2), although the author explicitly emphasizes the impact of social environment

Research hypotheses seem difficult to understand at the time of reading, as terms are used whose content is explained after 5-6 pages. I mean the levels of internalization of external incentives: introjected regulation, identified regulation, integrated regulation.

Question: Could motivation research be adapted to assess the risk of corruption?

Conclusion

The presented dissertation demonstrates: good knowledge and analysis of the theoretical approaches to the subject of the research; skilful combination of theoretical and empirical research, including skills for empirical information collecting, processing and interpretation; availability of author's scientific and scientific applied contributions. Given the qualities of the dissertation thesis presented I conclude that it fully meets the requirements for the award of educational and scientific degree "Doctor" to PhD student *Aristea Brazioti* for the dissertation on "*Relationship between*

motivation and work conditions as crucial topic in Human Resources management in the public sector”.

24.06.2021

Sofia

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