

OPINION

By: Prof. PhD Aleksandar Ivanov Marinov,
Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski”, Department of Public Administration,
member of scientific jury, appointed by the Rector of SU „St. Kliment Ohridski”, Order №
РД РД 38/243 - 17.05.2021

Regarding: PhD procedure in Professional Field 3.3. Political Science (Public
Administration)

PhD Thesis

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

By: **Aristea Brazioti**

1. General outline of the procedure

The PhD thesis „*Relationship between motivation and work conditions as crucial topic in Human Resources management in the public sector*”, supervised by prof. PhD Aleksandar Marinov was discussed and promoted to public defense by the council of Public Administration Department on May, 17, 2021.

The dissertation consists of 192 standard pages (along with the list of abbreviations, bibliography, and appendices). Structurally, it includes an introduction, an exposition in five chapters, and conclusions (applications of the dissertation and proposals are included). The literature used is a total of 112 sources. In support of the analysis, 36 tables, and 33 figures are given. The scientific sources are up to date, relevant, of wide conceptual variety and fully applied.

The PhD thesis is in line with the requirements of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA), and the regulations of Sofia University „St. Kliment Ohridski”.

2. General characteristic of the PhD thesis’ subject matter and methodology

The PhD thesis subject matter and purpose are definitely relevant, because Human resource management in public sector, including motivation study and optimization, is an crucial factor of competence, quality and rational allocation of civil servants.

According to the above, it is the duty of any manager to ensure that the relevant work conditions exist that can lead to a continuous improvement of motivation. Such conditions can be created by incorporating a suitable strategy of planning, implementation, systematic control and process redesign that will turn them into the driving force for the development of public servants.

The PhD thesis *research's aim*, defined by the author, is to explore the relationships between work conditions and employees' motivation, i.e. "to confirm the positive mediation of the factors that compose the work environment in terms of motivating civil servants". 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 *research hypotheses* arise from the theoretical approach of the subject of motivation that was under investigation and correspond to the research objectives of the study. The correlation of objectives and research questions of the PhD thesis are summarized in the definition of the three alternative research hypotheses.

A comprehensive outline of the research tasks and methods is offered. The author applies a large list of information sources, including his own empirical research, aiming to examine whether the organization (a public hospital) is taking action in order to improve management and organizational procedures in a continuous course for sustainable development.

Very important part of the thesis' pragmatic orientation is the purpose to contribute to the continuous improvement of management actions and policies concerning motivation.

The summary of the PhD thesis is in line with the requirements and contains the main methodological points and research steps, thus giving a full picture of the scientific achievements of the author. The self-assessment of the dissertation contributions is precise and in some sense modest.

3. General evaluation of the PhD thesis

The general evaluation of the PhD thesis leads to a conclusion about the author's good capacity to solve complex research tasks. Using several well known theoretical frameworks, Aristeia Brazioti applies them in a specific context, showing understanding and creativity.

I would like to outline at least four clearly manifested strengths of the dissertation.

First, the research problem choice. The obvious relevance is defined by the premise that effectiveness and efficiency of any civil service depend – in large degree - on staff's high motivation which supposes continuous improvement of organizational working conditions in order to meet the needs of the workforce.

Second, the formulation and the verification of the research hypotheses. In fact we are facing a complex network of research hypotheses, which verification includes several levels.

Third, the elaborating of a comprehensive, context sensitive conceptual framework. It combines different and sometimes even contradicting aspects of motivation studies.

Four, the pragmatic perspective of the research. The findings of the dissertation could significantly help public managers. In this way, the organizational - administrative and financial - management function could be improved and the efficiency and effectiveness of civil service, the satisfaction of the employees as well as the quality the provided services will be positively affected.

4. Scientific and applied contributions

The scientific contributions of the PhD thesis lay entirely in the declared subject matter of the study and are clearly oriented toward the conceptual and pragmatic development of human resources management in civil service.

Contributions could be structured in *three main dimensions*:

First. Elaboration and successful application of an approach of parallel study of the working conditions and motivation in order to find the problematic areas that need improvement actions and highlight the best management practices implemented. Hence, the development and control of the structural model that supports the positive impact of management actions' measurement as well as employees' surveys implementation for the promotion of an organizational culture of teamwork and collaboration in the workplace.

Second. The development and application of a structural model that supports the positive impact of measuring motivation and implementing employee surveys on the promotion of better working conditions.

Third. Despite the fact that the empirical research was limited to the specific field and to a specific geographical area, the approach offers possibilities for its implementation in other fields of public administration, in other public institutions, and also in other regions.

The three dimensions of author's contributions lead to the conclusion that the PhD thesis offers several scientific and applied results contributing to the development of the field of Public Administration. Thus the requirements of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA) are met.

5. Publications

Aristea Brazioti reports three scientific publications related to the dissertation, proving the systematic nature of the research activities. The PhD text and the corresponding publications are with no doubt personal work of the candidate.

6. Critical remarks, questions and recommendations

My overall positive impression of the PhD thesis rises no doubts. I have some specific questions and recommendations which could help the future scientific efforts of Aristea Brazioti and have already discussed with her.

Here I would like to ask the following question:

Can we speak of some specific (for the Greek public administration, compared to the general picture in EU) aspects of working conditions impact on civil servants motivation?

7. CONCLUSION

The content and the contributions of the PhD thesis are entirely in line with the requirements of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA) and other corresponding regulations. The qualification of the candidate is solid and well proven. These results give me compelling reasons to propose to the honorable scientific jury **to vote unanimously for the awarding of the PhD degree in the professional field 3.3. Political Science (Public Administration) to Aristea Brazioti.**

19.06.2021

Reviewer:

prof. PhD Aleksandar Marinov