

REVIEW

By: Prof. PhD Aleksandar Ivanov Marinov,
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Regarding: PhD procedure in Professional Field 3.3. Political Science
(Public Administration)

PhD Thesis

THE CATALYTIC ROLE OF LEADER: RESEARCH IN THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR

PhD student: **Nikolaos Pavlidis**

Supervisor: **Assoc. Prof. Albena Taneva**

1. General outline of the procedure

The PhD thesis „*The Catalytic Role of Leader: Research in the Public and Private Sector*”, supervised by Assoc. Prof. Albena Taneva, was presented and approved at the council of Public Administration Department.

The dissertation consists of almost 200 standard pages (along with the figures and tables lists, 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 an impressive total of 320 sources. 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.

2. General outline of the PhD thesis' subject matter and methodology

The PhD thesis subject matter and purpose are definitely relevant, because better empirical description and theoretical explanation of leadership processes and the relevant comparisons between the public and the private sector can outline important ways to understand the attitudes and perceptions of employees about the leader who is endowed with emotional intelligence and present the key role of a leader's emotional intelligence as a promoter for employees in their job satisfaction and encouragement policies.

The PhD thesis *2 general research's aim*, defined by the author, are “firstly, to explore the attitudes and perceptions of public and private employees regarding their motivation by the administration and leadership applied to the organization they work in and their consequent satisfaction or dissatisfaction, and secondly, to identify and highlight the importance of emotional intelligence to a leader and its connection with the variables of job satisfaction and motivation, which presuppose the existence of a positive work environment and increase employee productivity”.

The *research hypothesis* arises from the theoretical approach and include finding the answer to several research questions, namely: to what extent are public and private sector employees effectively pushed by their leader; what is the relationship between employees and their leader before and after the implementation of the researcher's training interventions with leaders; who is an effective leader for public and private sector employees / What are the leadership characteristics of a person who manages according to his or her subordinates; is emotional intelligence an essential building block of a successful and effective leader; what are the differences between a leader with formal qualifications and a leader with emotional intelligence, etc.

A comprehensive outline of the research methods is offered. The author applies a large list of information sources, including his own empirical research.

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, Nikolaos Pavlidis 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 – as the author puts it – that “we live in an era where - unfortunately - leaders are an endangered species.” Leaders with higher emotional intelligence, are surely the ones that organizations, both in public and private sector, need the most. Due to the economic and social crisis, the employees often feel insecure, dissatisfied and demotivated. So very important question is what leaders could do about it.

Second, the formulation and the verification of the research hypothesis. In fact, we are facing a complex research hypothesis, which verification includes several aspects. It encloses the testing of broad set of research data, showing that the leader's emotional intelligence leads to organizational change and the identification of leader and employees resulting in job satisfaction and employee motivation and that there is a positive correlation between effective leadership and motivation, as the leader influences employees' behavior and perceptions. Following his research logic, Nikolaos Pavlidis reaches several convincing conclusions.

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

contradicting aspects of leaderships studies. This offers the possibility for better understanding of the catalytic role of emotional intelligence and will be a clear and safe “guide” for future leaders who aim for high job benefits in an environment of equal opportunities, meritocracy, teamwork spirit and mutual respect.

Four, the pragmatic perspective of the research. The findings of the dissertation could significantly help organisations’ top management. In this way, the governance could be improved and the efficiency and effectiveness of HR policies will be positively affected. In this sense the PhD study brings valuable contributions and new perspectives.

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 leader’s emotional intelligence.

Contributions could be structured in *four main dimensions*:

First. Elaboration and successful verification of an approach to key characteristics of transformational, transactional and the so called authentic leadership, related to the social dimension of emotional intelligence.

Second. The development and application of a structural model that supports the positive reaction to the great double challenge to the companies and organizations - both to harmonize the needs of each employee with the needs of the company or organization as well as to listen to them and, above all, to respect them.

Third. Despite the fact that the empirical research was limited to the specific field in a specific geographical area, the approach offers possibilities for its implementation in other countries and regions, especially having in mind the new challenges after the covid-19 pandemic.

Four. The PhD research can help managers to reflect and adopt a democratic way of management, that respects the worker, his personality, taking into account both his origins and his current situation. In this way, it can achieve higher employee satisfaction, which is a necessary factor in growth and productivity.

The four 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 Political studies. Thus, the requirements of the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act (DASRBA) are met.

5. Critical remarks, questions and recommendations

My overall positive impression of the PhD thesis rises no doubts. I had some specific questions and recommendations, which could help the future scientific efforts of Nikolaos Pavlidis that we already discussed.

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 jury **to vote unanimously for the awarding of the PhD degree in the professional field 3.3. Political Science (Public Administration) to Nikolaos Pavlidis.**

25.06.2023

Reviewer:

prof. PhD Aleksandar Marinov