

R E V I E W

from Prof. Tsvetan Davidkov, Dr., based on Order RD-38-294/16-06-2022 of the Rector of Sofia University "Saint Kliment Ohridski"

of the dissertation work titled FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE JOB SATISFACTION OF EMPLOYEES IN THE ICT SECTOR

Author: Irina Yanchovska; Supervisor: Prof. Zhelyu Vladimirov, Dr.

The reviewed text is a dissertation work for awarding scientific-educational degree "Doctor" in professional field 3.7. Administration and Management. The author is a full-time doctoral student at the Department of Business Administration, part of the doctoral program in professional field 3.7 Administration and Management (Business Administration). She has completed the full curriculum on time and with good quality. Mrs. Irina Yanchovska has obtained her Bachelor's degree from the American University in Bulgaria and her Master's from Sofia University (FEBA). She has significant professional experience and has occupied various expert and management positions. She is an established project manager in the IT industry and has numerous certificates proving her professional competences. Mrs. Irina Yanchovska is one of the good and successful examples of professional cooperation between the Department of Business Administration and its doctoral students.

The dissertation length is 192 pages, distributed as follows: Introduction (pp. 1 - 5); Chapter 1 THEORETICAL AND EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW (6 - 114); Chapter 2 FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE JOB SATISFACTION OF EMPLOYEES IN THE ICT SECTOR FROM BULGARIA AND OTHER COUNTRIES (115 - 163); Appendices (164 – 181). References (182 - 192). A list of tables and figures is also available.

- The Introduction contains the initial claim for the significance of the research topic. The main objective of the dissertation work is to "to study the most important factors influencing job satisfaction of employees in the ICT sector and to measure their importance and strength of influence" (p. 3). Two

research questions (p. 3) and four research tasks (p. 4) are formulated. The empirical data used in the dissertation was collected in two field studies – respectively with 451 and 755 respondents.¹

- The content and structure of Chapter I systematically cover the needs of the stated research field. Job satisfaction has been examined through the prism of the main theoretical concepts and numerous empirical studies. Separate attention is paid to the scales for measuring job satisfaction (2.3.1, 2.3.2). The object of the study are satisfaction factors (groups of factors) (achievement, supervision, flexibility, communication, work nature, promotion, pay, recognition, colleagues, autonomy, plus stress and workload and various sociodemographic factors).
- Chapter 2 is structured as follows: 3.1 Preliminary Study (Questionnaire, Results); 3.2 Main Study (Questionnaire); 3.3 Methodology (One-dimensional Measures for Preliminary Analysis; Analysis of Job Satisfaction among the Different Sociodemographic Groups; Factor Analysis for Defining Factor Groups; Correlation Analysis; Multiple Linear Regression). Section 4 – Discussion and Conclusion includes: Practical and Theoretical Implications; Contribution; Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research.
- The so-called facet scales for measuring job satisfaction are included as an appendix (they are not printed as part of the dissertation paper version and can be viewed electronically as an attached file). The two questionnaires – for the preliminary and for the main surveys are also included as appendices (the two questionnaires are in English and Bulgarian).
- The references section includes a solid number of serious sources – mostly in English (10 of the titles are in Bulgarian). Sources are used correctly and to the point. Probably, the list of texts in Bulgarian can cover a wider range of authors.

The presented structure of the dissertation work is suitable for the genre and provides an opportunity for full development and deployment of the dissertation research.

My overall assessment of the text and the achieved results is positive, based on the following arguments:

- Researchers often approach the notion of job satisfaction, but nevertheless the subject remains topical and relevant. The high interest is due to multiple factors: the possibilities to integrate satisfaction into a variety of conceptual

¹ Further in the text the author works with 11 research hypotheses – see p. 95 et seq.

and research models; to explore different sociodemographic and cultural groups; the associated social and professional dynamics, etc. The choice can also be supported by the fact that the “generation” of new evidence (arguments) in support of (or to refute) the already established relationships and associations is a legitimate form of scientific contribution.

- The author shows good dexterity and a developed scientific culture in the implementation of the various research tasks – in the review of the theoretical concepts and empirical studies (Chapter I); in the review and identification of the potential satisfaction factors (Chapter I); in structuring, justifying and implementing the research project. From a formal point of view, the presented results are correct.
- Notably, the dependent variable is measured and defined in two different ways – as *general* and as *global* satisfaction. This expands the possibilities for comparative analysis and is a step towards the creation of a more promising (perspective) research model.
- The stated goals have been achieved – the author seeks (and gives) an answer to two research questions: 1. Which are the factors that ICT employees identify as most important for their personal job satisfaction? and 2. How do the various identified factors affect the overall job satisfaction of ICT employees? The research hypotheses have been tested correctly.
- In general, the exposition is clear and logical; the text is well organized. The evidence is presented in a comprehensive way. The author shows very good theoretical preparation and practical skills in working with statistical tools for data processing and interpretation.
- The style of the discussion on the obtained results is rich, meaningful and well structured.

Opportunities and suggestions for improvement. In previous discussions of the dissertation, we have talked with the author about possibilities for improvement, which have been taken into consideration and are reflected in the present version of the text.

When examining the influence of satisfaction with specific characteristics of work (or the workplace) on the general (global) satisfaction, researchers achieve different levels of explanatory power (R^2). In this case the reported explanatory power is 62-63% (p. 147). The researcher's desire to achieve higher explanatory power requires the creation of a strategy for subsequent research. Attempts to achieve this objective by "discovering" the optimal list of "important things" for people in the organization

– as a rule – do not contribute to the desired results (for various reasons). In this sense, probably it is a good idea for the future to develop the model by including a section based on the „big five“² – this would enrich the explanatory scheme with personality profiles described by characteristics other than the traditional sociodemographic characteristics.

The stated scientific contributions can be defended. For the needs of the dissertation research, the author has examined and summarized a significant corpus of previous publications and studies; on the basis of several surveys and preliminary research, she has structured a working tool to gather primary empirical information about the most important factors that influence employee job satisfaction in the examined industry. The obtained results are valuable and usable. The contributions are methodological and methodical in nature. The author has obtained new knowledge on the subject of the study, based on which one can reveal essential characteristics of the organizational situation in the ICT industry. These results have practical and applied value for managers, HR specialists and other functional specialists. The results will enter scientific circulation for comparison with results from other studies.

The abstract is an adequate representation of the dissertation research.

The author has developed three publications in English on the topic of the dissertation. The publications present substantial results of the research executed for the dissertation. They satisfy the requirements for publication activity.

I know the author personally; I have worked with her on various projects and tasks. Our mutual work gives me a reason to constantly reaffirm my high opinion and assessment of her qualities and work. For me it is a pleasure to work with Irina Yanchovska.

Given the above, I draw the following conclusion: the presented text is a complete and accomplished dissertation study, realized under high performance criteria. The text provides convincing evidence for achieving the goals of the doctoral program – the author is able to independently conduct scientific research, maintaining high professional standards.

For this reason and bearing in mind that all the substantive and procedural requirements for the awarding of a scientific-educational degree “doctor” have been

² See for example Tair, E. (2020) Lichnost i trudovo povedenie [Personality and Work Behavior]. Sofia, BAS publishing house; p. 63 and Furnham, E. (2013) Individual Differences in the Workplace. Sofia, Iztok – Zapad, etc.

met, I will support a decision to award a scientific-educational degree “doctor” to Mrs. Irina Yanchovska in professional field 3.7 Administration and Management, based on her dissertation work titled “FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE JOB SATISFACTION OF EMPLOYEES IN THE ICT SECTOR”.

I wish Irina Yanchovska and her supervisor Prof. Zhelyu Vladimirov, Dr. much success.

Sofia, July 22, 2022

Signature:

(Prof. Tsvetan Davidkov, Dr.)