

VARNA FREE UNIVERSITY "CHERNORIZETS HRABAR "

OPINION

By: *Assoc .prof. Svetla Kostadinova Mihaleva, PhD*, Varna Free University „Chernorizets Hrabar”, Department of „Administration, Management and Political Sciences“, Scientific major "Organization and Management Outside the Sphere of Material Production"

Subject: Dissertation work for the award of the educational and scientific degree "PhD" in professional field 3.7 Administration and Management, scientific major "Social Management"

Author of the dissertation work: *Zornitsa Georgieva Stefanova-Ivanova*

Topic of the dissertation work: *“Benefits of Executive Coaching for Professional and Personal Self-realizationя”*

Grounds for presenting the opinion: Participation in the composition of the scientific jury for the defense of the dissertation according to Order RD 38-123/13.03.2023 of the Rector of "St. Kliment Ohridski" Sofia University

1. General characteristics of the presented dissertation work

The thesis submitted for defense has a volume of 215 pages, of which 191 pages are the main text, including an introduction, two chapters, a conclusion, and 2 appendices. The text contains 33 figures, 23 tables, 3 graphs, a list of the literature used - 315 sources, of which 12 are in Bulgarian. Although the work has a specific structure and an uneven distribution of the text of the individual paragraphs, it is clear that the doctoral student works in this field, thorough investigation and research has been done, which is presented with the proven hypotheses.

The presented dissertation is dedicated to an extremely interesting issue with growing relevance, as executive coaching is an irreplaceable and extremely effective process: individual, tailored to the specifics of each leader. It is well known that

leadership training is a global industry, but more than 50% of US companies are having an extremely difficult time filling leadership positions.

In the dissertation, the main parameters of the research are correctly formulated and examined in detail:

- Motives of the research work;
- Relevance and significance of the dissertation work;
- Object, subject and scope of the research;
- The goals and research tasks of the dissertation work;
- Scientific and research thesis;
- Scientific and research hypotheses and conceptual model.

The research methods are not highlighted, and we find the limitations of the research in a separate paragraph of the dissertation work.

In a substantive aspect, the dissertation focuses on the usefulness of executive coaching and to what extent it is useful for the development of the personal potential of leaders and how personal development affects effective management, career development, teamwork and organizational performance.

Chapter 1 of the dissertation presents a theoretical literature review of new leaders, the challenges facing leaders and organizations, as well as trends in the development of leaders. The essence, process of coaching, coaching models, types of coaching, etc. are highlighted. Special attention is paid to executive coaching - its essence, specifics and approaches, possible unwanted effects of it, as well as its expected benefits.

Chapter 2 is fully devoted to the methodology of the research and the analysis of the results. As an interesting highlight, I find that the limitations of the study are almost at the end of the dissertation, and should be highlighted in the introduction.

In general, in terms of content, the theoretical presentation and the empirical research are clearly distinguished. The text is correctly formed in editorial and

stylistic terms. In terms of structure, the dissertation work is not well balanced, and the Chapter 1 has a predominance, which is twice as large as the Chapter 2.

Based on what has been presented, I consider that the dissertation submitted for opinion has a complete form as an independent scientific study.

2. Assessment of the obtained scientific and scientific-applied results

Above all, the interdisciplinary analysis and the author's complex study of the selected important and significant issues deserve a positive assessment.

I accept as a significant result the conclusions made by the author in the dissertation work and the presented scientific and theoretical contributions. Among them, they deserve to stand out:

- the derived conceptual relationship between the personal and professional benefits of coaching for the self-realization of leaders;
- the created and approbated instrument (questionnaire) for quantitative measurement of the benefits of executive coaching for the personal and professional self-realization of leaders;
- revealed positive relationships between personal self-realization and effective management, career development, teamwork, and organizational performance;
- the author's first conceptual connection between the personal and professional benefits of coaching for the self-realization of leaders;
- revealed positive relationships between personal self-actualization and effective management, career development, teamwork, and organizational performance.

In general, the assessment of the received scientific and theoretical contributions and their practical application gives grounds for the conclusion that the set goal and research tasks of the dissertation have been fulfilled, the eight hypotheses have been proven and the research thesis has been confirmed.

Regarding the *reference/citation* of the various sources in the presented dissertation work, it should be stated that they are used correctly and in good faith. Within the scope of my competence, I have not found and do not have any information about *plagiarism* in this work.

3. Assessment of scientific and scientific-applied contributions

I fully accept the second, third, fourth and fifth scientific and theoretical contributions formulated by the doctoral student, as well as their practical significance indicated by the doctoral student.

4. Assessment of dissertation publications

The doctoral student presents three independent publications and five reports on the topic of the dissertation research. All publications and reports are entirely in the issues of the dissertation work, reflect the main results and provide the necessary publicity of the research.

5. Assessment of the author's abstract

The abstract of the dissertation is 49 pages long. It is correctly formatted, objectively presents the research and its results.

6. Critical notes and recommendations

Three recommendations can be made to the dissertation research, aimed at the future research activity of Zornitsa Stefanova in the chosen field of interest:

1. Academic correctness implies compliance with generally accepted requirements for the structure of the abstract, as well as for the dissertation work itself.

2. The work would win if at least two or three scientific and applied contributions stand out in it, as there is enough experience in coaching in Bulgaria.
3. I recommend to the PhD student that the significant results of her research work find an even wider presence in international publications, referenced and indexed in the world-famous scientific information databases Scopus and WoS.

These recommendations do not completely reduce the positive assessment of the content, scope and contributions of the dissertation work and are aimed at future creative pursuits of the doctoral student.

7. Conclusion

The dissertation submitted for defense has the character of a completed scientific study. The PhD student demonstrates the ability to analyze, generalize and offer her own solutions in this increasingly developing interdisciplinary field such as coaching and specifically executive coaching. The obtained contribution results from the dissertation research give me reason to assume that the work has the necessary merits and fully meets the requirements of the The Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria Act and the Regulations for its Application.

With conviction, I give a positive assessment of the dissertation work and propose to the members of the honorable Scientific Jury to award the educational and scientific degree "PhD" to Zornitsa Georgieva Stefanova-Ivanova in the major "Social Management" in professional field 3.7. Administration and Management

01.05.2023
City of Varna

Signature:


assoc.prof. Svetla Mihaleva, PhD