

REVIEWER'S OPINION

on the dissertation
**"FACTORS AFFECTING JOB SATISFACTION OF EMPLOYEES IN THE ICT
SECTOR"**

author: Irina Petkova Yanchovska

full-time doctoral student at the Department of Business Administration
for awarding the educational and scientific degree DOCTOR in the professional field
3.7 Administration and Management

Grounds for presenting the review: Member of the Scientific Jury for dissertation defense according to Order RD-38-294/16.06.2022 by the Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski"

Dissertation data. The doctoral student Irina Petkova Yanchovska is a graduate of the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration - she graduated her Master's degree in Business Administration - Strategic Management at the Faculty of Economics and Business administration, Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" (2016-2019), as before that she had obtained a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration by the American University in Blagoevgrad (2000-2005).

She owns professional certificates Scrum Master TM II, Professional Scrum Master TM I, Professional Scrum Product Owner TM I, etc. She has over 15 years of experience in the ICT sector, and since 2001 she has been working as a Project Manager at Transmetrix AD. Irina Yanchovska possesses communication, organizational and leadership skills, as well as a high level of critical and analytical thinking.

Data for the doctoral study. Irina Yanchovska was enrolled as a full-time doctoral student within the Department of Business Administration at the Faculty of Economics and Business Administration in January 2019. She has successfully passed the exams according to her individual plan, as well as the preliminary defense of her dissertation work in 2022. There is no data on any violations committed during the realization of the doctoral studies.

During her studies as a doctoral student, Irina Yanchovksa participated in various scientific conferences and international forums, took part in research projects and in some key activities of the department of Business Administration.

Description of the dissertation text . The presented dissertation is 192 pages long, of which 163 pages are main text, 18 pages are appendices and 11 pages are bibliography. It is structured consequently in Introduction (p. 1-5); 2 chapters (chapter I - p. 6-114; chapter II p. 115-151, Discussion, and Conclusion containing all the contributions and limitations of the dissertation work. (p. 152-163). Three appendices have been added, which are bound in the same book body. The scientific development contains 6 figures and 27 tables. The bibliography includes 198 sources, of which 11 are in Cyrillic.

In the *Introduction* part, the doctoral student describes the structure of the dissertation, presents the motivation for working on the topic and substantiates its relevance in the context of dynamic changes in the work environment, objectified by the rapid development of digital technologies and the changing demands of employees, which define their expectations and job satisfaction.

The purpose of the study and the resulting tasks, the object and the subject of the research within the framework of the dissertation are correctly presented. The choice of methodology and research tools have been justified.

First chapter "Theoretical Foundations and Empirical Review" is in a volume of 108 pages. It is devoted to the literature review. The level of satisfaction limited within the work environment is determined. Various studies on employee satisfaction in different countries are presented, scales for measuring satisfaction are commented on, and a synthesis of various factors that influence employees' satisfaction is made. The resulting scientific statement is impressive. A model for the empirical study was derived, on the basis of which the research tools were created.

The *second chapter*, entitled "Factors influencing the satisfaction of employees in the ICT sector from Bulgaria and other countries", is in a volume of 36 pages. It describes in detail the methodology for the empirical research, by means of which Irina Yanchovska shows good knowledge of both the tools for conducting quantitative research, as well as

the statistical apparatus for handling data. The doctoral student has described the path of preparation for conducting her research, the test phase and the actual search. The interrelationships between the obtained results have been critically traced and conclusions have been formulated that provide grounds for the further acceptance or rejection of the scientific hypotheses.

Analyzing the results from the study, the researcher found out that seven of the hypotheses were confirmed, namely that satisfaction with achievements, leadership, communication, nature of work, opportunities for growth and remuneration in the workplace positively influence the overall satisfaction of employees in the ICT sector, while stress and excessive workload in the workplace negatively affect the overall satisfaction of employees in the ICT sector. Three of the hypotheses do not receive statistical support, namely, that satisfaction with flexible working conditions, with the recognition received and with the opportunities for independence positively influence the general satisfaction of employees in the ICT sector. The hypothesis that satisfaction in relationships with colleagues positively affects overall employee satisfaction in the ICT sector is partially confirmed.

In the *Discussion and conclusion part*, the author makes a critical comment on the obtained results, offers conclusions and generalizations from the theoretical-practical study, which she verifies with data from other studies in the relative field.

According to the dissertation "...the results of the present research work are important from an academic point of view to identify the factors that influence the job satisfaction of employees in the ICT industry, and in practice can be used by technology companies to create effective tools to increase employees' satisfaction, which would have a positive impact on improving strategic organizational performance' (p. 167).

The *appendices* to the dissertation text present the research tools used to conduct the research.

Evaluation of the dissertation . My overall assessment of the dissertation work is positive. The arguments for this assessment are:

- The problem-thematic field of the dissertation work is current and gives a wide field for development, both from a theoretical and a practical point of view.

- The dissertation research is ambitious – the doctoral student attempts to provide a starting point for analysis and discussion about the central role that job satisfaction plays in the context of organizational success.
- The chosen methods for processing the empirical information correspond to the research model, enabling a correct analysis and a reasoned answer to the research questions and the verification of the hypotheses.
- The author's model and the attempt made to evaluate the significance of the criteria included in the study deserve a high rating.
- The scholar work is sustained, both in terms of content and quality of critical analysis and argumentation, as well as in terms of overall vision and layout.

Questions, criticisms, suggestions . In view of the shown potential for the development of the dissertation, I would make some recommendations and notes to be taken into account in future research on the topic:

- The obtained data (and the demonstrated opportunities for the dissertation's analysis) give reason to expect a more extended discussion and comments on the results of the research at the expense of the detailed description of previous research in the field;
- I believe that the used phrase "global satisfaction" can be replaced by a more appropriate one, which on one hand represents unfinished content, and on the other - easily distinguishes it from "general satisfaction";
- The used scientific sources can be enriched with studies in the field of workplace satisfaction by Bulgarian researchers;
- Last but not least, too many foreign phrases were used, which could be replaced by their Bulgarian equivalent.

Contributions . I accept the scientific contributions requested by the doctoral student. The mentioned contributions contain both theoretical-applied and practical-applied aspects.

The abstract is developed according to the requirements and shows the main points of the dissertation work.

I am confident that the presented text is an entire result of the author's personal efforts.

We don't have any joint publications.

Three publications related to the issues of the dissertation are presented.

Personal impressions . I have known Irina Yanchovska for years, initially as a student in the master's program Business Administration, and then as a doctoral student at the Department of Business Administration. I know her academical work and I am fully convinced that Irina is a person you can rely on, highly responsible and goal-oriented, with high personal standards and self-requirements.

In terms of the above mentioned and taking into consideration the following:

- It is clear from the submitted documents that the required procedure has been followed;
- The dissertation contains protected scientific and scientific-applied results; the candidate demonstrates thorough training and capacity for independent research;
- The requirements for awarding the scientific and educational degree DOCTOR in terms of the administrative regulations, the regulations for the implementation of the respective legislation, the regulations of Sofia University on the conditions and procedures for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic positions have been met.

I propose that Irina Petkova Yanchovska to be awarded the educational and scientific degree DOCTOR in professional field 3.7 Administration and management.

Sofia, August 17, 2022

Reviewer:

(Assoc. Prof. Iya Petkova, PhD)

