

REVIEW

From: **PROF. DR. GALINA GEORGIEVA KURTEVA**,
professional field: *3.7. Administration and management*,
scientific specialty: *Social Management*
HEIs/ Scientific organization: *Burgas Free University*

Concerning: dissertation on the award of educational and scientific degree "**doctor**" in the field of higher education 3. "Social, Economic and Legal Sciences", professional field 3.7. "Administration and Management", scientific specialty (doctoral program) "Administration and Management (Business Administration)" at IBS.

Grounds for presenting the opinion: participation in the composition of the scientific jury on the defense of the dissertation according to Order No 61 / 02.04.2024 of the Rector of IBS and decision of the first meeting of the scientific jury of 16.04.2024.

Author of the dissertation: ***Stefan Predrag Djordjevic***

Thesis topic: ***Leadership role in managing project teams***

Scientific Director: ***Ass. Dr. Daryan Boykov***

The opinion was prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (ZRASRB), the Regulations for its Implementation (RASAARB) and the Ordinance on the Development of the Academic Staff of IBS.

I. Reference for the candidate

PhD student Stefan Djordjevic holds a Bachelor of Computer Science and a Master's degree in Project Management and Software Engineering. From 2021. is studying at IBS under the Doctoral Program "Administration and Management (Business Administration)", according to Order No 130 / 06.07.2021. the Rector of IBS. The training takes place in an independent form.

II. General characteristics of the dissertation

The presented dissertation is dedicated to a topical issue for modern management related to the effectiveness of teamwork. The author focuses on the role of the leader for the success of modern project-oriented corporate structures and the *subject of his scientific study* are the peculiarities of the implementation of leadership management of project teams and its correlation with the multifactorial conditions of the external environment, the type of project and its life cycle.

PhD student Stefan Djordjevic has justified *the topicality* of the issues he examines with the importance of teams in the process of organizational excellence. According to him, they are a basic structural unit of the organizations of the future, which is a prerequisite for the search for conceptually new management approaches to designing effective human interaction. The author assumes that the effective management of the project team is based on the conviction, that the project, the team and the process (technology) of management form a system that must be balanced and this can be achieved through situational leadership. In this aspect, according to him, the behavior of the leader in teamwork should also be improved. Based on this, the PhD student Stefan Djordjevic also derives his main *research thesis* that the sustainability and effectiveness of project team management is in linear relation to leadership experience, competencies, skills, behavior and personal characteristics applied in a specific situational business environment.

It should be emphasized that despite the importance of the problematics, it is only partially developed in the modern scientific literature. This reinforces the contribution of the development to overcoming theoretical deficits in the field of project management and in particular the importance of the leader in the management of project teams.

The dissertation has a clearly defined purpose, object and scope of the study, correctly set tasks for the realization of the goal, correctly defined the main thesis and the restrictive conditions for its proving.

The total volume of Stefan Djordjevic's dissertation is 186 pages. The main text is supported by 13 graphs, 16 tables and 8 figures. There are also two annexes presenting the content of the appended by the author a model for evaluation of the team and a questionnaire used in conducting the scientific research. *The volume of development is more than satisfactory.*

The content of the paper has a classical structure - an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, a list of literary sources and is generally *logically sound and well balanced by chapters and paragraphs.*

The dissertation is based on the study, analysis and systematization of numerous scientific publications, literary and information sources in the subject area studied. The presented list contains a total of 234 literary and information sources (in English and Bulgarian), which shows the good literary awareness of the author. The literary sources are relevant to the research scientific problem, they are appropriately used in the presentation of the dissertation work and are correctly quoted. *Stefan Djordjevic's ability to carry out scientific selection and criticism of other people's opinions and concepts when he structures his opinion in order to prove the main thesis of his dissertation deserves high praise.*

III. Evaluation of scientific and applied research results obtained

The main results of the study are presented in the different parts of the dissertation.

➤ The content of the first chapter of the dissertation presents in retrospect the PhD student's study on the state and essence of project management as an effective management concept and examines the management approaches and mechanisms used in practice. It should be emphasized the scientific accuracy of the author in defining the conceptual apparatus used in the dissertation (approach, principle, method of management; project; logical framework of the project; teamwork; working group and team). In this chapter the doctoral student presents

the different criteria for assessing the effectiveness of teamwork as a major factor for successful project implementation. According to their requirements, the doctoral student systematizes basic, proven in practice as effective, managerial rules and approaches in the work of the team leader.

➤ The second chapter of the dissertation is also conceptual in nature, and here the focus is on the role of the leader in the management of project teams. The essence of leadership is clarified by highlighting the difference between leadership and management, respectively leader and manager. The main approaches to the study of leadership in different theories of leadership are presented. Based on this, different leadership styles and their effectiveness in different situations are distinguished. In this chapter, the author also brings out the main dimensions of leadership behavior in teamwork.

➤ In the third chapter the PhD student presents the results of the empirical research and the factor analysis of the influence of leadership characteristics on the effectiveness of team activity. The object of the study is the role of the leader in increasing the effectiveness of teamwork. The subject of the study is an assessment of the real state of the relationship "leadership characteristics – effectiveness of teamwork" in modern organizations from the cross-border region – Niš region and Sofia region. The dissertation survey was conducted among 168 managers and members of project teams from different levels of management in organizations from Nis and Sofia in the second half of 2021. The author applies an innovative approach to determining the respondents to the survey using the teamwork test of Patrick Lencioni. According to the author, this approach provides greater reliability of the received answers and assessments, used in factor analysis of leadership role in team activity. The conducted research allows Stefan Djordjevic to deduce in a well-grounded manner the functional dependencies between the managerial skills and the managerial level of the manager in the project. The PhD also examines the degree of impact of management skills on the effectiveness of teamwork, taking into account the uncertainty in the manager's behavior arising from situational factors.

The authorship of the described results is not in doubt, and in addition to their detailed description in the dissertation, the author has applied empirical results from an empirical study.

These results correspond entirely to the tasks set in the introduction of the dissertation, which is grounds to take into account the successful detailed implementation of the main goal of the development.

IV. Evaluation of received scientific and applied research contributions

The dissertation paper is interesting and memorable with the extremely precise logical statement of the conducted research, as well as with the good ability of the doctoral student to present his attitude to the studied issues and to justify the conclusions and recommendations made. The developed dissertation is of interest to scientific and public practice and with the contained in it a number of posts, ideas and proposals, which can be evaluated as *contributions of a theoretical and practic-applied nature*.

Systematized basic skills, competences and values for creative and effective leadership in the team; the identified specifics of the relationship between the personal characteristics and competences of the leader and the motivation for successful team activity; the new impacts of known and defined problems in teamwork, influencing leadership behavior; As well as the summarized main groups of factors determining the development and improvement of leadership behavior in team activities can be assessed as contributions of a theoretical nature.

In its entirety, the dissertation study is also of a practical nature. The innovative approach used by the PhD student in the preliminary professional selection of survey respondents is practically applicable in assessing the level and status of teamwork in organizations. The way of using known theoretical schemes, models and interpretations of

leader behavior can also be assessed as a useful applied model in assessing the effectiveness of project teams.

In conclusion, I accept the contribution points made by the PhD student Stefan Djordjevic in his dissertation. I appreciate the contributions as significant both for the practice and for the enrichment of the existing knowledge on the issues studied in the dissertation.

V. Evaluation of dissertation publications

Stefan Djordjevic presents 9 publications on the dissertation issues – 5 articles in reputable specialized international journals and 4 reports. In 7 of the publications, the PhD student is a co-author. In terms of the number of publications, the PhD student exceeds many times the requirements.

The list of publications shows the ability of the doctoral student to inform the scientific community appropriately about their research work. The publications presented contain basic dissertations from the dissertation. They promote contributions from the author's research.

VI. Evaluation of the autoref

The deposited autoreferate is 44 pages. The autoreferate is compiled according to the requirements, reflecting in a synthesized form the content of the dissertation, thesis, object and methodology of the study, as well as the final results obtained. The autoabstract presents a reference of the contribution moments in the conducted scientific research, as well as the publications on the dissertation.

VII. Critical remarks, recommendations and questions

I have no critical remarks on the presentation of the ideas and productions in the dissertation. I recommend the PhD student to define priorities arising from the topicality of the dissertation, to deepen their research and to continue to promote the results of his research in authoritative international publications and forums.

VIII. Summary conclusion

The development on "Leadership role in project team management" has the qualities of a dissertation for awarding the scientific and educational degree "Doctor", as it presents the doctoral student's abilities to identify and research a current scientific problem, to summarize opinions, to study the practice and to make conclusions and recommendations. The ideas and results of the conducted research the author has promoted in appropriate publications.

All this gives me grounds to categorically put a positive assessment of the dissertation and to recommend to the members of the Scientific Jury to award the scientific and educational degree "Doctor" in the scientific specialty "Administration and Management (Business Administration)" in professional field 3.7. "Administration and Management" by Stefan Predrag Djordjevic.

27.05.2024

Signature: 