

REVIEW

by Prof. Valentina Ilieva Staneva, PhD

Professional direction 3.8. "Economics", Scientific specialty "Accounting, control and analysis of economic activity", TU "Todor Kableshev" – Sofia

Regarding: Participation as a member of a scientific jury in a procedure for the defense of dissertation work for awarding the educational and scientific degree "**Doctor**" in the field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, Professional direction 3.7. "Administration and Management", doctoral program "Administration and Management"/Business Administration/, according to order No. 143 of 04.07.2024 of the Rector of the International Business School, Prof. Georgi Apostolov, PhD.

Author: Milka Hristova Nanova (self-study)

Topic: "The role of communications in the management of projects"

Research supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Daryan Boykov, PhD.

I. Applicant Reference

Doctoral student Milka Nanova holds a master's degree in "International Economic Relations" from UNSS-Sofia. She graduated from Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", specialty "Russian Philology" and has a postgraduate qualification from Thrace University - Stara Zagora in English language and literature. He has experience as an expert, chief expert, director of a directorate, head of a sector in various ministries and departments of the state administration in the Republic of Bulgaria in the field of international activity, project management and administration.

The acquired practical experience of the doctoral student creates prerequisites for scientific expression and development in the field of the dissertation development chosen as a topic.

II. General characteristics of the dissertation work

The dissertation is structured logically and in accordance with the content in an introduction, three chapters, conclusion and bibliography, contributions and one appendix - a questionnaire for researching the role of communications in project management, with a total volume of 183 standard computer pages, of which 169 pages are the main text, which includes 25 tables and 42 figures, a total of 73 sources (of which 5 are in Bulgarian, 68 in English). The exposition of the dissertation work is composed of three chapters, relatively proportionate in volume, which meet the requirements for a dissertation work.

The topic of the dissertation is interesting and relevant due to the fact that with the increase in the complexity of modern projects, the number of interested parties and the necessary information, the communication within the project becomes more complicated. The relevance of the research is determined by the doctoral student with the processes of globalization in the world economy, which pose new challenges to the dynamics in the organizational and management environment (including the project environment), the development of communication technologies and the possibilities for their application in project management.

The object of this dissertation is communication as an area with a key role and importance in the implementation of projects, related to their effective management.

The subject of the study is the management of communications and communication processes in project management.

The purpose of this dissertation is to investigate the role of communications and communication processes in project management.

The research tasks that the doctoral student set herself at the beginning of the study have been fulfilled, with conclusions drawn in each chapter.

The main research thesis of the doctoral student is that "for the successful management of projects and the realization of the planned activities, various communication techniques and approaches play a key role."

The main objective and research questions in the study are clearly and precisely formulated, in accordance with the defined problem, related to the use of the right communication techniques and approaches, selected successfully in terms of scope

and content. The choice of object and subject of research is correct in view of the appropriately chosen ratio between the concreteness of the research and the abstraction of the conclusions.

The structure of the dissertation is in the following sequence:

The first chapter of the work presents the terms important for the study and their definitions used in the specialized literature, and the author also gives his own working definitions. The main participants in project management, as well as the nature and role of communication in project management, are examined. The presented communication theories in the specialized literature highlight the role of communication in project management, to which the author adds his view on the successful management of the communication process. Theoretical models of communication competence propose a set of competences included in the communication competence of the manager.

The author's proposed competency models of project team leaders and communication competency in project management expand and supplement the theory. In relation to approaches and methods in project management, the author proposes a model for project management, with an emphasis on the application of management principles within the project.

In Chapter Two, the author focuses on communication management as a key area in project management. The processes of planning, management, monitoring and control of project information, provided through appropriate communication means through different communication channels, depending on the needs of participants and interested parties during the entire life cycle of the project, have been studied. Stakeholder identification and analysis are included. Significant attention is paid to the communication skills of managers to achieve effectiveness and the communication strategies of project managers.

The Third Chapter presents the results of an empirical study of the role of communications in project management. The study surveyed 143 respondents via a self-created questionnaire in an online environment. The results of the study confirm the hypotheses and summarize that a complex of competencies is necessary for successful project management, and the lack of competencies of the manager is a

barrier to successful project management. It also confirms that to achieve management effectiveness, the project team and stakeholders also need a certain set of competencies.

III.Evaluation of the obtained scientific and scientific-applied results

The dissertation work of doctoral student Milka Nanova has high scientific merits. The research is characterized by convincingly and clearly defended positions and conclusions, both in terms of the analyzed theories and in terms of the author's proposed models of competence (of project team leaders and in project management), project management and effective leadership. I evaluate as objective and correct the attached reference for the scientific achievements of a contributing nature contained in the dissertation work. My general assessment is that the presented results of the research done in the dissertation work can be characterized as enrichment of existing knowledge and application of scientific achievements in the field of communications in project management.

The dissertation work is an independent development of high scientific value and practical significance. The problem posed in it reveals further possibilities for deepening the research activity. The results and proposals in the dissertation research can find practical application in the field of project management and their administration, through the application of effective communication.

IV. Assessment of received scientific and scientific-applied contributions

Based on what is presented in the dissertation, I accept the stated scientific and scientific-applied achievements in the dissertation and consider them to be the personal work of the doctoral student. In my opinion, they could be distinguished into those of a theoretical (1, 2 and 4) and of an applied nature (3, 5 and 6). In a synthesized form, the following contributions to the work can be summarized:

1. Theoretical contributions:

– a critical review of the theory was made and the scientific literature was supplemented with the proposed author's definitions for: "Communication", "Project",

"Project management", "Project team", "Project risk", "Risk management in projects", "Project Communications Management" and "Cultural Identity";

- on the basis of a study of the theory and practice of project management, a critical review of the competence models was made and author's developments were proposed for models - two for competence (of project team leaders and in project management) and two for management (of projects and effective leadership);
- it is proposed to include an additional component in the management of communications in international projects - cultural identity.

2. Scientific and applied contributions:

- Maps for managing "Risks-Threats" and "Risks-Opportunities" are proposed for use;
- the scientific literature, theory and practice on project management and achieving efficiency in the activity has been supplemented with a proposal for implementing the following two strategies - for managing communications in international projects and for achieving efficiency;
- conclusions and recommendations for improving project management practice with the application of models, strategies and a set of competencies are drawn.

The contributions correspond to the content of the dissertation work and the results of the research.

V. Evaluation of dissertation publications

The doctoral student indicated 6 publications related to the dissertation work, one independent and 5 co-authored, published in peer-reviewed scientific publications, including articles and reports in the country and abroad. All publications are in the problem area of the dissertation research. They are written correctly and reflect specific aspects of the doctoral student's research work. They are representative and ensure sufficient dissemination of the research results among the academic community. I believe that the scientometric requirements regarding the publication activity of the doctoral student have been fully met.

VI. Evaluation of the autoref

The dissertation is accompanied by a 47-page abstract. It accurately and sufficiently clearly reflects the content of the dissertation work. In the auto-abstract, the most important moments of the research are also highlighted. The requirements for the layout of an abstract have been met, including all the necessary attributes. Through the abstract, one can get a true idea of the dissertation work and its merits.

VII. Critical notes, recommendations and questions

The dissertation explores the significance of the role of communications in project management, along with the need for effective leadership, appropriate communications management strategies, and methods to achieve effective communications in project management. My recommendation to the PhD student is to publish her dissertation as a book and continue her research in the subject area. The benefit will be to the audience interested in communication issues in project management. I have no critical remarks about the thesis. The thesis fully complies with the content and structure of the minimum national requirements for the acquisition of the ESD "Doctor". A strong impression is made by the very good connection between scientific and applied achievements and the possibility of their use in practice.

There is no information that casts doubt on the authorship of the presented dissertation work. The text shows the commitment of PhD student Milka Hristova Nanova to the subject, as well as her very good knowledge.

VIII. Summary conclusion

The dissertation contains scientific and scientific-applied contributions and results, which represent an original contribution to science and meet all the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB) and the Regulations for the Implementation of LDASRB. The presented materials and dissertation results fully comply with the specific requirements of the Regulations for the admission and training of doctoral students at International Business School.

The dissertation shows that the doctoral student Milka Hristova Nanova has in-depth theoretical knowledge and professional skills in Professional Direction 3.7. Administration and management, demonstrating qualities and skills for independent conduct of scientific research.

Due to the above, I confidently give my positive assessment of the conducted research, presented by the above-reviewed materials of the procedure, and I propose to the honorable scientific jury to award the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" to Milka Hristova Nanova in the Higher Education Field 3. Social, economic and legal sciences; Professional Direction 3.7. Administration and management; doctoral program "Administration and Management"/Business Administration/.

12/08/2024

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Prof. Valentina Staneva, PhD