

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 143 / 04.07.2024 of the Rector of IBS and decision of the first meeting of the scientific jury of 17.07.2024.

Author of the dissertation: ***Milka Hristova Nanova***

Thesis topic: ***The Role of communications in Project management***

Scientific Director: ***Assoc. Prof. 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

The PhD student Milka Hristova Nanova graduated from Sofia University "St. Kl. Ohridski" specialist in Russian philology in 1992, and in 2005 received a Master's degree in International Economic Relations at UNSS - Sofia. Since 2021 she has been studying at MBBU in the PhD program "Administration and Management (Business Administration)", according to the Order № 252/09.12.2021 of the Rector of MBBU. The training takes place in an independent form.

II. General characteristics of the dissertation

The presented dissertation on "The Role of Communications in Project Management" has a classical structure - an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion and a bibliographic reference, as well as a list of figures and tables used in the text. The volume of the work is more

than satisfactory - 183 pages, including 1 appendix of 6 pages. The content is relatively well balanced by chapters and paragraphs. The main text is supported by 42 figures and 25 tables.

The dissertation explores a topical issue for modern organizations related to project management and specifically the role of communications in project management. The doctoral candidate justifies the relevance of the researched problem with the increase in the size and complexity of modern organizational development projects resulting from multiple factors such as globalization, dynamics in the organizational and management environment, the development of communication technologies, and the number of stakeholders in the implementation of these projects. The PhD student emphasizes the need to create conditions for effective communication, which is a prerequisite for the successful implementation of a project.

The subject of the dissertation research is communication management and communication processes in project management, the object - communication as an area with a key role and importance for project management related to their effective management and overall success.

The main thesis of the PhD student is that different communication techniques and approaches play a key role in successful project management and implementation of planned activities. To prove her thesis, the PhD student aims to explore the role of communications and communication processes in project management. 3 hypotheses are the object of verification. The first one is related to the assumption that a set of competences are necessary for a successful project management. In the second hypothesis, the doctoral student assumes that the lack of manager competencies are a barrier to successful project management, and in the third hypothesis, the assumption is that to achieve effectiveness in management, the project team and stakeholders also need a certain set of competencies.

To fulfill her research objective, the PhD student set herself four tasks: outlining the theoretical framework of the research problem; investigating communication management as a key area in project management; conducting an empirical study to determine the importance of communication and its role in project management, and on this basis deriving recommendations for improving communication in project management.

My summary assessment is that the PhD student has correctly justified the relevance of the issues she is studying, has clearly outlined the aim and object of her dissertation research, and has correctly defined her main thesis.

In order to prove the main thesis of her dissertation, the PhD student researched, analyzed and systematized various literature and information sources. The presented list contains 73 sources (books, articles) in Bulgarian and English. *The literature used is varied and focused on the researched scientific problem, it is appropriately and correctly cited.*

III. Evaluation of scientific and applied research results obtained

The main results of the research are presented in the individual parts of the thesis.

In the first chapter, based on research and analysis of the main literature on the dissertation problems, the PhD student clarifies the conceptual apparatus, identifies the main actors in project management, presents the methods popular in the specialized literature in project management and project risk management, the strategies for communication management in project implementation, and offers her views on practical methodological approaches and tools.

It is necessary to emphasize the scientific accuracy of the doctoral student in the derivation of the working definitions of the concepts "communication", "project", "project management", "project team". In this chapter the PhD student justifies and proposes her view on the set of competences of project team leaders and the content of communication competence in project management. Authors' elaborations of the Competency Model of Project Team

Leaders and the Communication Competency Model of Project Management are proposed. For the purpose of the dissertation research, the PhD student arguably proposes a modification of Fayol's classical management cycle and project life cycle model and presents her Project Management Competency Model, which incorporates the key management principles at any time in any project phase. Considering the critical components in project management (schedule, budget, scope and quality) and the risk they can cause, the PhD student proposes the use of a Project Risk Map and the completion of a Register of actions taken to manage and control the identified risks. The author's proposed Communication Management Strategy for projects, which is a prerequisite for their effective implementation, also deserves high praise.

In chapter two, the PhD student discusses communications management as a key area in project management, with a particular focus on communications in international project management, and offers her view on a strategy for managing communications in international projects. Considering cultural identity as a communication problem in the international project environment, the PhD student systematises the problems and tools related to this identity. In this chapter, the doctoral student also systematizes the communication competencies of a project manager and proposes a Model for Effective Leadership, arguing for the possibility of applying popular leadership styles as strategies to achieve effectiveness.

Chapter 3 presents the results of the empirical study on the role of communications in project management. The achievement of these results is facilitated by the clear and consistent methodology applied by the PhD student, which allows her to successfully verify and justify her research thesis. The research tools used are diverse. Milka Nanova successfully applied both scientific (synthesis, analysis, comparison, generalization) and empirical (quantitative and qualitative) methods. Summarizing and analyzing the information from the conducted survey reveals the doctoral student's skills to synthesize, systematize, verify and on this basis to argumentatively propose guidelines and recommendations for overcoming problems in communication processes and improving communication effectiveness in project management.

My summary assessment is that the results in the dissertation have a theoretical, methodological and applied character and correspond fully with the set tasks in the introduction of the dissertation, which is a reason to consider the successful detailed realization of the main objective of the research.

IV. Evaluation of received scientific and applied research contributions

Some of the results achieved in the dissertation, such as individual statements, ideas and proposals can be evaluated as contributions of scientific and applied nature. *I accept the contributions of the doctoral student Milka Nanova in her dissertation. I evaluate them as significant both for practice and for enrichment of the existing knowledge on the issues studied in the dissertation.*

In my opinion, significant for the theory are the author's proposed definitions of basic concepts in the field of project management (project, project management, project team, project lynx, project risk management) and communication processes in project management (communication, project communication management, cultural identity in international project management). The project management theory is also enriched by the author's proposed additional component in managing communications in international projects: cultural identity (issues/barriers and impact tools).

In its entirety, the dissertation research has a practical-applied character with:

- The authors' development of the Competency Model for Project Team Leaders; Communication Competency Model for Project Management; Project Management Model; Effective Leadership Model.

- The proposed Risk-Threat and Risk-Opportunity Management Maps are useful.

- The authors' guidelines for implementing the Project Communications Management Strategy; International Project Communications Management Strategy; Strategies for Achieving Effectiveness.
- Suggested recommendations for improving communications in the project management process.

V. Evaluation of dissertation publications

Milka Nanova presents 6 publications on the thesis: five papers presented at international scientific forums and one article in an international journal. One of the publications is independent.

The publications are sufficient according to the minimum scientific metrics. They promote the main thesis, the research results and the contributions of the dissertation.

VI. Evaluation of the abstract

The submitted abstract is 47 pages. It is well formatted according to the requirements and its content corresponds correctly with the main work, reflecting in a synthesized form the content of the dissertation, the thesis, the object and methodology of the study, as well as the final results obtained.

The abstract also includes an account of the contributions to the research. The reference is properly composed and reflects objectively the results achieved by the doctoral student.

VII. Critical comments, recommendations and questions

I have no critical comments on the presentation of the ideas and propositions in the dissertation.


Taking into account the practical applicability of the results achieved by the PhD student and presented in the dissertation, I consider it appropriate for her to publish an independent work with methodological guidelines for effective communication management in project management.

VIII. Summary conclusion

The development of the topic "The role of communications in project management" has the qualities of a dissertation for the award of the scientific and educational degree "Doctor". The research done in the development shows the ability of the PhD student Milka Hristova Nanova to formulate and analyze a current scientific problem; to summarize opinions; to study practice and to justify theoretical and methodological constructs, some of which can be evaluated as contributions of scientific and applied nature.

*Taking into account the advantages of the scientific development I express my **positive evaluation of the dissertation** and recommend the members of the Scientific Jury to award the scientific and educational degree "DOCTOR" in the scientific specialty "Administration and Management (Business Administration)" in the professional field 3.7. "Administration and Management" by Milka Hristova Nanova.*

18.07.2024

Signature: .
/Prof. Dr. Galina Kurteva/