



**Международно Висше Бизнес Училище
International Business School**

OPINION

by Prof. Ph.D. Sevdalina Dimitrova

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Regarding: presented dissertation work for the acquisition of 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)"

Reason for presenting the review: member of the Scientific Jury, according to Order No. 143 of 04.07.2024 of the Rector of the International Business School

Author of the dissertation: Milka Hristova Nanova

Dissertation topic: „The role of communications in project management“

I. Applicant Reference

Doctoral student Nanova graduated in 1992, majoring in "Russian Philology" at the University of St. Kliment Ohridski". He specialized in post-graduate qualification in English language and literature at Thrace University, Stara Zagora in the period 1994-1996. In 2005, he acquired the Master's degree in International Economic Relations at UNSS. From 09.12.2021, she was enrolled as a doctoral student in independent training at the International Business School under the professional scientific guidance of Assoc. Dr. Daryan Boykov.

Her professional realization is in municipal and state structures, directly related to project management and international cooperation. A consequence of this are her creative interests in the field of project management, which is manifested in her dissertation work.

II. General characteristics of the dissertation work

Modern organizations and scientific thought in the search for mechanisms and tools in response to the demands for adaptability and innovation of the dynamically changing organizational environment naturally turn to project management. The problems in this direction are as familiar as they are controversial. A number of respectable developments and publications have been devoted to them, but there is still a void in the scientific knowledge regarding communications and information, as key to the effectiveness of management in project-oriented organizations. This circumstance in itself defines the relevance of the topic of the presented dissertation work, in accordance with which PhD student Nanova formulates the research goal, the subject and the object of scientific knowledge, the research theses about the key role of communication techniques and approaches in the management of projects, the defensibility of which is through the provability of the three research hypotheses formulated in the dissertation.

The achievement of the research goal formulated by the doctoral student Nanova is through the solution of the specific research tasks and the applicability of the generally recognized theoretical and empirical methods of scientific knowledge. For greater specificity of the author's scientific research, the permissible restrictive conditions are also defined.

The reading of the dissertation is in support of the full compliance of the topic with the main content of the same.

A dissertation is presented to the scientific community, distinguished by the clarity and logic of research, with an analytical research style of presentation. Scientific solutions of a practical-applied nature are proposed for the role of communication and information for effective project management in a dynamically changing business environment. The specifics of the analytical-research work in the dissertation indisputably prove the contributions of doctoral student Nanova to enriching the theory, generating new knowledge and improving the practice of effective project activity.

The dissertation work is structured in accordance with the formulated goals and specific research tasks, the chosen methodology and tools. It follows the classic structure - introduction, exposition in three chapters, from introduction, three chapters, conclusion, bibliography, appendices.

The achievement of the goal, the decisiveness of the tasks and the defensibility of the research theses and hypotheses in the presented studies and analyses, is in a volume of 183 pages. 73 titles were used, of which 5 in Cyrillic, 68 in Latin. The content of the scientific work is illustrated with 42 figures and 25 tables. The defensibility of the conclusions and results in the dissertation work is through a successful symbiosis of theoretical-scientific and practical-cognitive study of the researched issues, supported by the necessary evidentiary materials. This gives me reason to assume that the dissertation is an independent and in-depth study of a key problem of project management effectiveness. Results significant for theory and practice were achieved, scientifically substantiating the key role of communications in project management, supporting the researched issues.

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

The proposed dissertation fully corresponds as a scientific development in terms of volume and quality to the legal requirements for awarding the educational and scientific degree "doctor". The individual structural elements of the dissertation are developed in a logical sequence, with the necessary analytical, applied methodology and creation of a conceptual model for the role of communications for effective project management.

The scientific and scientific-applied results of the author's research are based on the in-depth knowledge and creative adaptation of modern scientific theories and publications on the researched issues.

The introduction of the dissertation work is a kind of algorithm for the organization and sequence of the research work of doctoral student Nanova.

The first chapter of the dissertation is a kind of theoretical framework of communications in project management. A theoretical overview of the conceptual apparatus, the participants in project management and the role of communications in project management has been made, and for this purpose PhD student Nanova demonstrates a well-intentioned critical view of the existing theories in the specialized literature and on this basis defends and adds her view of the role of communications in project management.

On the basis of the systematization of the main theoretical statements and models of communication competence, the author proposes a conceptual framework of a model of competences of project managers, a model of communication competence in project management and a model of project management. Attention is also paid to project risk management and project communication management strategies, for which purpose two types of author's strategies for project communication management are proposed. The first research task has been solved.

The second chapter explores in a theoretical aspect the management of communications and their key role for project management. For this purpose, the processes related to the provision and provision of project information through appropriate means of communication and communication channels to the interested parties throughout the entire life cycle of the project have been specified. Based on the idea of the importance of the project environment, a conceptual framework of the specifics of communication management in international projects and the existing communication barriers, the overcoming of which is directly dependent on the applicability of appropriate communication management strategies in international projects, has been researched and analyzed.

The communication skills of the project managers and the communication strategies of the leaders were also investigated, and an author's interpretation of the leadership styles known in the theory was proposed. On this basis, doctoral student Nanova offers strategies for achieving efficiency and defends the idea of the leadership role of the project manager by introducing the concept of "manager-leader". The need for the possession of a set of communicative competencies for a project manager-leader for the purposes of effective project management is scientifically substantiated.

In support of this is the proposed model for effective management throughout the project life cycle. The second research task has been solved.

The third chapter is of an empirical-applied nature. A survey was conducted on the role of communications in project management, and 143 respondents were surveyed in an online environment. The survey results support the research hypotheses and the defensibility of the research thesis. The necessity of having a set of competencies as a guarantor of effective project management has been proven. On this basis, the conceptual models and strategies proposed by doctoral student Nanova have been verified and allow the derivation of specific recommendations for effective communications in project management and overcoming communication barriers through the necessary set of competencies for the project manager-leader. The third and fourth research tasks have been solved.

At the conclusion of the dissertation, the doctoral student summarizes and systematizes the general conclusions and results of the scientific research, with which the dissertation is a complete and in-depth work on a scientific problem important for the theory and practice of project management. This gives me the reason to accept the claims of doctoral student Nanova for achieved significant scientific and scientific-applied results and contributions, which I systematize as follows:

Scientific results and contributions

1.1. The theoretical propositions related to the conceptual framework of the key role of communications in project management are further developed.

1.2. Project management theory is enriched based on systematized existing project management theories, competency models and strategies for managing communications in international projects and achieving effectiveness.

1.3. New knowledge about the key role of communications in project management is generated by proposing a conceptual framework of the author's competency models of project team leaders, communication competency in project management, project management and effective leadership.

Scientific and applied results and contributions

1.4. An empirical study was conducted based on the survey approach, the results of which allow the scientific justification of the set of competencies of the manager-leader for effective project management.

1.5. A conceptual model has been developed for the generation and identification of risks and threats in project management on the basis of proposed "Risk-Threat" and "Risk-Opportunity" Management Maps“.

1.6. Specific actions are proposed to improve communications in project management.

The dissertation is distinguished by the clarity and logic of the research. The style of the presentation is logical, analytical, scientific research. During the course of the review, no cases of plagiarism have occurred and I have not detected them.

IV. Assessment of received scientific and scientific-applied contributions

The scientific and scientific-applied results of the research carried out in the dissertation work are reduced to proving with new means essential and new aspects of existing scientific problems and theories. They enrich the theory of project

management and expand knowledge about the role of communications in project management.

The developed conceptual models and strategies for managing communications in projects, in particular in international projects, and for achieving efficiency have been verified and allow the scientific justification of a complex of project manager-leader competencies contributing to successful communication in project management.

The results of the research carried out in the dissertation represent the personal work of doctoral student Nanova and outline the significance of the contributions made to the theory and practice of project management and the role of communications. They can serve as a methodological basis for the further research work of doctoral student Milka Nanova.

V. Evaluation of dissertation publications

The results of the author's scientific research in the present work have been popularized in 5 (five) publications in the country and abroad as a confirmation of the consistent, in-depth, upgrading scientific research activity of doctoral student Nanova. One of them is the author's and four are co-authorships, which cover the NMI for acquiring the ONS "doctor" in PN 3.7. "Administration and management", with the total point equivalent being 83.33 points, with a minimum requirement of 80 points.

VI. Evaluation of the autoref

The abstract contains the main problems and ways to solve them, indicated in the dissertation work. It gives a full picture of the scientific value and practical applicability of the achieved scientific and scientific-applied results and contributions, in support of the defensibility of the research thesis and working hypotheses.

VII. Critical notes, recommendations and questions

I have no specific critical remarks and questions about the dissertation, but rather recommendations for increasing publication activity in the future in indexed and referenced editions in the world scientific database and publishing the dissertation work in the form of a book to make it available to a wider audience circle of readers and interested structures and bodies whose rationality supports effective project management.

VIII. Summary conclusion

The dissertation work on the topic "The role of communications in project management", developed by doctoral student Milka Hristova Nanova, is a complete, in-depth, structured scientific work on an extremely current problem, containing scientific and scientific-applied results and contributions that are significant for theory and practice. They are personal work and in support of the author's ability to independently develop important issues for the theory and practice of project management related to the role of communications in project management. The dissertation is a methodological basis for future scientific research of doctoral student Nanova, for which he has both potential and professional experience. The achieved

scientific and scientific-applied results and contributions of doctoral student Milka Nanova's research, which are significant for theory and practice, based on his above-mentioned qualities and potential for scientific research activity, give me grounds for a **positive evaluation of the dissertation work**. I believe that it will be highly appreciated by the unbiased reader and can serve as a basis for future research.

The dissertation complies with the Law on the development of academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria, the Regulations for its implementation and the regulations of the International Business School. With conviction, I propose to the respected members of the scientific jury to award doctoral candidate Milka Hristova Nanova Educational and Scientific Degree "doctor" for the developed dissertation work on the topic "The role of communications in project management" 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 Management)".

31.07.2024
Veliko Tarnovo

Member of the scientific jury:
Prof. D.Sc. Sevdalina Dimitrova