

REVIEW

by Prof. Kristiyan Stoyanov Hadzhiev, Head of the Department of Administration and Management, New Bulgarian University, Sofia, Professional Direction 3.7, Administration, and Management, scientific specialty "Social Management."

Subject: Dissertation Work Evaluation for the Award of Educational and Scientific Degree "Doctor" in the Scientific Specialty "Administration and Management (Business administration)" within professional direction 3.7 "Administration and Management"

Author of the Dissertation: Milica Nebojša Milenković - independent doctoral student in the doctoral program "Business Administration" at IBS

Dissertation Topic: "The role of intercultural communication in the management and development of modern business organizations"

Scientific supervisor: Prof. Vance Bojkov, PhD

Reason for Providing the Review: Participation in the Scientific Jury, in compliance with Order №240/03.11.2023 of the Rector of IBS, Prof. Georgi Apostolov, PhD

The review has been prepared in accordance with the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria Act, the Regulations for the Implementation of this Act, and the Ordinance on the Development of the Academic Staff of IBS

1. General characteristics of the presented dissertation work

The reviewed dissertation spans 245 pages and comprises an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, a bibliographical reference, 3 appendices, and a glossary. The main text encompasses 42 tables and 18 figures. It incorporates 217 literary sources supporting the exposition, with 14 in Cyrillic and 203 in the Latin script.

The dissertation addresses a **highly relevant** theme concerning intercultural communication in the management and development of modern business organizations. The systemic relationships between the components of intercultural communication competence and intercultural sensitivity have been scrutinized through appropriate empirical methods. The content exhibits a practical-applied character.

The dissertation demonstrates **balance**, logical sequence, and connection in presenting the considered issues. The scientific presentation style and technical layout are commendable. The purpose and tasks align consistently with the dissertation's theme. The scientific problem is well-formulated, with clear boundaries. The methodology is comprehensive, and concepts and terms are well-defined.

The literature used closely aligns with the dissertation's topic, offering a thorough depiction of the researched problem. The sources adhere to accepted standards in arrangement and numbering. The doctoral student provides a critical interpretation of the cited theses, demonstrating a clear understanding.

The text is effectively complemented with tables, figures, and diagrams, enhancing comprehension. The scientific research results are presented clearly, logically, and comprehensibly. Overall, the clarity exhibited by the doctoral student is considered a prerequisite for the dissertation's high quality.

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

The structure of the dissertation work aligns with the formulated goal and detailed tasks.

The introduction contains all necessary elements: a convincing problem justification, a clear goal and research task formulations, and a rationale for research approaches and methods. Conventions in which the research was conducted are identified.

In **the first chapter**, the conceptual apparatus, fundamental theoretical concepts, and relations related to intercultural communication are clarified. The depth of the research problem's development and the formation of the theoretical basis for the main research thesis become evident. Conclusions in this chapter are reasonable and well-supported. The research in the *first chapter* is very thorough and constitutes the necessary foundation for the development of the methodology of the empirical study

The **second chapter** delves into *the methodological foundations*, analyzing *intercultural communication competence* through the "triangular" model" (Chen and Starosta, 1996) examining intercultural sensitivity, intercultural awareness, and intercultural agility/skill. A particular focus is placed on the affective and behavioral components, which is argued through intercultural sensitivity, a consequence of the intercultural globalization of society in recent decades.

The doctoral student identifies new systemic rules and reciprocal compensatory connections between the components (and models) of intercultural communication competence in the context of organizational management. The conclusion that arises is that this complex of social abilities and skills for communication with culturally different individuals, skills for the manifestation of cultural relativism, empathy, tolerance, and the transfer of values, is acquired and developed through intercultural training

The third chapter presents the empirical research and analyzes immediate results. The methodology and tools are well-argued, and hypotheses are formulated. The role of intercultural communication in organizational management and the relationships between the factors of intercultural communication competence are measured by the doctoral student using Chen's model (1992). The components of intercultural sensitivity, according to Bhauk and Brislin's model (1992) - understanding of cultural behavior, openness to cultural differences, and cultural flexibility in the subjects under study, are also assessed. On this basis, the research toolkit was created, which includes two questionnaires: one for measuring and analyzing intercultural communication competence, using a 5-point scale and focusing on 5 factors - commitment, respect, trust, pleasure, attention/participation, and another questionnaire to measure intercultural sensitivity.

The results of the two questionnaires were processed with statistical software - **IBM SPSS Statistics**, and for the analysis, the doctoral student utilized reliability analysis, factor analysis, variance analysis (ANOVA), T-test, correlation analysis, and regression analysis. Specific conclusions and recommendations are formulated based on the conducted research with 129 respondents.

The necessary conclusion is that in all three substantive chapters, the doctoral student demonstrates skills for clearly highlighting and providing a reasoned scientific defense of

their views regarding the role of intercultural communication and competence in the management and development of modern business organizations in conditions of globalization.

In the *conclusion* of the dissertation, the doctoral student systematizes the immediate *results and conclusions* from the complex research of the methodology and practice in the management of intercultural communication in organizations. *The dissertation research result* confirms the formulated **main** research **thesis**, namely that intercultural communication plays a key role in the management of organizations that function in an intercultural environment and include culturally different individuals. Tools have been identified through which management can develop adequate levels *of intercultural communication competence* to overcome cultural distances and barriers for the successful functioning of organizations through intercultural interaction.

3. Description of scientific and scientific-applied contributions

The dissertation is *a serious scientific study* of a current and significant problem. The main points of contribution can be considered and evaluated in two groups - scientific contributions and practical-applied contributions. I fully endorse the contributions formulated by the PhD student.

4. Impact of the dissertation work on the external environment

Eight publications have been published on the topic of the dissertation: one independent and seven co-authored, in renowned specialized international scientific publications, which attests that many of the ideas and conclusions formulated in the research are accessible to a professional audience. All of them reflect specific aspects of the doctoral student's research work and provide the necessary publicity.

5. Evaluation of the abstract

The submitted abstract correctly reflects the content of the dissertation work. It summarizes the main points of the dissertation: general characteristics; content and construction of the work; scientific contributions; and publications on the issues of the dissertation.

6. Criticisms, recommendations, and questions

I have no critical notes, recommendations, or questions regarding the presentation of ideas and statements in the dissertation work.

7. Conclusion

The presented dissertation shows that the author has in-depth knowledge in the issues they are researching. The topic of the dissertation work is current and significant in a scientific and practical-applied aspect. The dissertation is a fully completed scientific and practical-applied study that meets the requirements of the Development of the Academic Staff Act, the Regulations for its Application, as well as the internal normative base of IBS for awarding the educational and scientific degree "Doctor."

In their research, the doctoral student demonstrates the ability *to conduct independent scientific research and achieve tangible scientific and scientifically applied results and contributions.*

All of this gives me reason to provide **a positive assessment of the dissertation work** and recommend to the esteemed members of the scientific jury to make a decision **to confer the academic and scientific degree of "Doctor" upon Milica Nebojša Milenković in the scientific specialty of "Business Administration" within professional direction 3.7 "Administration and Management."**

Sofia

14th December, 2023

Signature:

(Prof. Kristiyan Hadzhiev, PhD)