REVIEW

Reviewer: Assoc.Prof. Sezgin Bekir, PhD
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On the PhD dissertation titled: **"The Impact of Emotional and Collective Intelligence on Workplace Resilience"**
Concerning: Public defence of a PhD thesis for the award of the educational and scientific degree of "Doctor" in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.2. Psychology, Doctoral Programme "General Psychology (Personality Psychology)"
Doctoral candidate: Asen Petrov Trichkov

1. Overview of the Dissertation – Volume and Structure

The dissertation submitted by Asen Trichkov is focused on studying the interaction between the personality, the team, and the work environment, with the primary research interest centered on examining the effects of emotional intelligence and collective intelligence on workplace resilience, as well as clarifying the psychological and social mechanisms that support adaptation and sustainable functioning in the workplace.

The dissertation is structured into an introduction, three chapters, principal findings of the study, a conclusion, scientific and applied contributions, practical implications, a bibliography, and an appendix. The total length of the dissertation, excluding appendices, is 165 standard pages and includes 37 tables, 1 figure, and 1 appendix containing the research questionnaires. An impressive bibliography is provided, comprising 31 sources in Bulgarian and 354 sources in English.

The first chapter presents an overview of the main theoretical approaches concerning the emergence and development of the concepts of emotional intelligence, collective intelligence, and workplace resilience, which constitute the conceptual framework of the dissertation research. The second chapter outlines the overall design of the empirical study, including the theoretical model, research aim, objectives, hypotheses, research design, and methodology, as well as a justification for the relevance of their selection. The results and discussion are presented in the third chapter, where the findings are summarized, limitations are

identified, and directions for future research are outlined. The dissertation concludes with the principal findings of the study, a general conclusion, and a discussion of the practical applicability of the results obtained.

2. Review of the literature and theoretical background of the study

PhD candidate Asen Trichkov presents a comprehensive and systematically organized literature review encompassing both Bulgarian and international research, demonstrating solid theoretical preparation and in-depth knowledge of the dissertation topic. The presentation of the main theoretical concepts and findings from previous studies is well balanced, and, together with an appropriate problematization of the subject matter, logically establishes the theoretical foundations of the dissertation research. The theoretical section systematizes the principal approaches to emotional intelligence, collective intelligence, and workplace resilience, with emphasis on their development, multidimensional nature, and applicability within organizational contexts.

Initially, the most widely recognized models related to the emergence and development of the concept of emotional intelligence are presented. The review includes a clarification of emotional intelligence as a cognitive-emotional ability that can be developed (Salovey & Mayer, 1990), as a personality trait and emotional self-efficacy (Petrides & Furnham, 2001), and as a personality characteristic combining elements of competence and general dispositions (Bar-On, 1997; Goleman, 2001). The doctoral candidate makes a logical transition to the manifestations and measurement instruments of emotional intelligence, including those applicable in workplace settings, and reviews significant Bulgarian and international studies concerning its influence on various organizational behaviors such as work engagement, organizational commitment, team effectiveness, leadership, and talent development.

The second issue on which Asen Trichkov focuses is collective intelligence, examined primarily in two dimensions: as the aggregate of the emotional intelligence of group members (Jordan & Troth, 2004) or as a manifestation of emotional intelligence at the team level, reflected in the team's ability to perform a variety of tasks collectively (Elfenbein, 2006; Woolley et al., 2010). The doctoral candidate critically distinguishes between collective emotional intelligence, understood as the group members' capacity to recognize and regulate emotions in order to achieve effective interaction and sustainable outcomes, and collective intelligence, which refers primarily to the group's cognitive ability to solve tasks. Particular emphasis is placed on the development of the so-called "c factor" (Woolley et al., 2010), analogous to the general intelligence factor "g" (Spearman, 1904), and on approaches to

measuring collective intelligence. The relationships between individual knowledge and skills, the processes of mobilization, coordination, and management of individual capabilities at the group level, and their manifestation in the workplace in the form of organizational intelligence are thoroughly examined.

The third focal point of the dissertation concerns resilience, conceptualized as a dynamic and context-dependent process that emerges through the interaction between individual resources and the social environment and leads to effective adaptation under adverse conditions (Denckla et al., 2020; Galy et al., 2023). The development of the concept of resilience in occupational contexts is traced, emphasizing its substantial importance in light of increasing demands, limited resources, and the accelerated digitalization of contemporary organizations.

It should be emphasized that Asen Trichkov skillfully argues the importance of jointly examining the variables under consideration and succeeds in achieving a focused presentation of the empirical research, providing a sufficiently robust justification for the chosen direction of the dissertation study.

3. Methodological Approach

In addition to demonstrating extensive knowledge of the research problem and strong comparative analytical skills, which reveal competence in working with scientific literature, the multidimensional nature of the study should also be highlighted. The theoretical model presented in Figure 1 is well substantiated, reflects the main variables and the relationships among them, and clearly formulates the research aim, objectives, and hypotheses.

The aim of the study is defined as investigating the relationships between emotional intelligence and collective intelligence, establishing their joint influence on workplace resilience, and examining the effects of individual and organizational characteristics—gender, age, position, and organizational sector—on emotional intelligence, collective intelligence, and workplace resilience. The general hypothesis assumes the existence of a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and collective intelligence, as well as a joint direct effect of these constructs on workplace resilience. The aim is operationalized through four research objectives. One general and four specific hypotheses are formulated and tested on a sample of 297 participants, comprising 189 women, 102 men, and 6 respondents who did not specify their gender, between 22 and 61 years old ($M = 36.32$, $SD = 7.24$).

In accordance with the research aim and hypotheses, a set of quantitative instruments was selected. The following questionnaires, adapted by the author for the Bulgarian context, were employed: the Work Group Emotional Intelligence Profile – Short (WEIP-S; Jordan &

Troth, 2004), the Collective Intelligence Scale (Kaur & Shah, 2018), and the Resilience at Work Scale (R@W; Winwood et al., 2013). The research methodology also included questions concerning demographic and organizational characteristics.

The psychometric characteristics of the selected instruments are described, confirming the doctoral candidate's methodological rigor and research competence. To assess the reliability of the methods, principal component factor analysis with varimax rotation and reliability analysis were conducted, while the testing of the hypotheses was carried out through frequency, correlation, analysis of variance, and regression analyses. The examination of the factor structure of the selected instruments, as well as the internal consistency of the scales, demonstrated acceptable characteristics for most of the measures used in the study.

4. Significance and Strength of the Results, Interpretations, and Conclusions

The dissertation research was conducted during 2024 and 2025 in Sofia using the online platform Typeform and a voluntary participation approach while ensuring participant anonymity. The empirical findings and their discussion are presented in the third chapter of the dissertation. The data analysis was conducted appropriately, and the obtained results are summarized at the end of the respective sections and synthesized in a separate section entitled Principal Findings of the Study.

Overall, the findings confirm the general hypothesis regarding the existence of a significant positive relationship between emotional intelligence and collective intelligence, as well as a joint direct effect of both constructs on workplace resilience. The results obtained by Asen Trichkov, indicating higher levels of emotional and collective intelligence combined with moderately high workplace resilience, suggest that within the studied sample emotional intelligence and collective intelligence function as stable adaptive resources that are already relatively well developed. The identified differences related to gender, age, position, and sector were isolated rather than systematic, supporting the author's assumption that biological and demographic factors exert only a limited influence on levels of emotional and collective intelligence in the workplace. Instead, their manifestations appear to be shaped within social-role and organizational contexts. This finding likely provides grounds for the author's assumption that the fundamental mechanisms of emotional intelligence are universal and amenable to development regardless of gender. Significant positional differences were identified, with managers demonstrating higher scores in managing others' emotions and, together with specialists, showing greater autonomy as a factor of collective intelligence. The author notes that this result is consistent with theoretical models according to which higher

organizational levels activate more developed socio-emotional competencies associated with leadership, responsibility, and strategic thinking.

The established relationships among emotional intelligence, collective intelligence, and workplace resilience support the study's hypothesis that these constructs form an interconnected system of personal and social resources capable of fostering stability, adaptability, and effectiveness at the individual, group, and organizational levels.

The presentation of the results is detailed and follows the logic of the research design. The clear structure of the text and the organization of distinct sections with explicit subheadings stand out as one of the strengths of the dissertation. The presentation and interpretation of the findings are aligned with the stated aim and research objectives. Particularly noteworthy is the systematic and coherent presentation of the results, the manner in which they are interpreted as evidence supporting the hypotheses, and the references to findings from comparable studies.

The summaries and conclusions are clearly substantiated, demonstrating Asen Trichkov's precision and scientific competence. The limitations of the study are discussed in a meaningful rather than merely formal manner. Directions for future research are outlined, and specific examples of practical applicability are proposed in the fields of human resource management, organizational development, and employee training. This constitutes another important strength of the dissertation and further enhances its value from both scientific and applied perspectives.

5. Critical Remarks on the Dissertation

It should be stated that Asen Trichkov's dissertation is of high quality and possesses substantial practical applicability. The recommendations made during the preliminary discussions and the procedure for admission to public defense have been taken into consideration and incorporated into the final version of the dissertation. Therefore, I have no substantial critical remarks regarding the dissertation.

6. Scientific Contributions of the Dissertation

The dissertation examines the evolution of the concepts of emotional intelligence, collective intelligence, and resilience from personality characteristics to multidimensional phenomena positively associated with adaptation, psychological well-being, effective communication, social relationships, education, and professional life. A critical analysis of these constructs is provided at both the individual and the group/organizational levels, and special emphasis should be placed on the inclusion of outsourcing companies as a distinct element of

the study. In my view, this constitutes the innovative aspect of the research, as such organizations are characterized by specific working conditions and therefore provide a particularly appropriate environment for investigating workplace resilience and the role of emotional and collective intelligence as resources for coping, effective communication, and sustainable professional functioning.

The dissertation possesses both scientific and scientific-applied contributions that merit recognition:

1) Theoretical contribution – the development of an integrated model examining the interaction among emotional intelligence, collective intelligence, and workplace resilience;

2) Methodological contribution – the adaptation and psychometric validation of three research instruments for the Bulgarian sociocultural context;

3) Research contribution – the establishment of significant relationships and a joint predictive effect of emotional intelligence and collective intelligence on workplace resilience;

4) Applied contribution – the formulation of practical guidelines for the development of emotional intelligence, the creation of psychologically safe team environments, and the implementation of work-life balance policies, which may be utilized in designing organizational policies and practices aimed at improving employee well-being and enhancing organizational climate.

7. Assessment of the Quality of the Doctoral Candidate's Scientific Publications in Relation to Meeting the National Minimum Requirements

During the doctoral studies, four publications were produced (three published and one in press)—two in Bulgarian and two in English. These publications were issued between 2022 and 2026; two were co-authored with the scientific supervisor, and two were single-authored. All four publications meet the requirements of the Act on Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria and its implementing regulations, have been published in peer-reviewed scientific outlets, and are directly related to the topic of the dissertation.

The author's dissertation abstract comprises 26 pages and accurately and comprehensively reflects the content of the dissertation research. It demonstrates the doctoral candidate's ability to evaluate the achieved scientific results, present the accomplished aims and objectives, and formulate the scientific, methodological, and applied contributions of the dissertation research.

8. Originality of the Dissertation Research

Upon comparing the dissertation with the sources available to me, I found no evidence of plagiarism or other forms of unauthorized borrowing. The report generated by StrikePlagiarism, together with the other documents provided, gives me sufficient grounds to conclude that the dissertation research is the doctoral candidate's own original work.

CONCLUSION

In my opinion, despite the long-standing scholarly interest in emotional intelligence and collective intelligence, the dissertation presented is highly relevant and constitutes a comprehensive and completed independent theoretical and empirical study. The significance and scientific-applied contribution of the research lie in expanding knowledge regarding the joint influence of emotional intelligence and collective intelligence on the development of workplace resilience. The consideration of individual and organizational characteristics as contextual factors rather than primary predictors opens avenues for discussion and future research. Based on the foregoing, I give a **positive evaluation** of the dissertation entitled **" The Impact of Emotional and Collective Intelligence on Workplace Resilience"** by Asen Petrov Trichkov and confidently recommend that the esteemed Scientific Jury award the author the educational and scientific degree of "Doctor" in the field of higher education 3. Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, professional field 3.2. Psychology, doctoral programme "General Psychology (Personality Psychology)."

Sofia, 10 June 2026 Signature: *Assoc. Prof. Sezgin Bekir, PhD*