

## Review of a dissertation

Dissertation author: **Moshe Katan**

Name of the dissertation: **Reconstructing the process of leadership development**

Review author: **Oto Potluka**

### Overall view on the dissertation

Thank you for enabling me to read the dissertation on the interesting topic of leadership development. I have read the thesis carefully and find it of sufficient *quality to justify the doctoral degree of the candidate* Mosche Katan. I see the literature work as very strong, and it is evident that the author has spent much time studying leadership. On the other hand, he also had to devote adequate time to collect data. The following text presents my complimentary and critical comments on the thesis.

### Introduction and literature review

In the beginning, the author clearly states the need for studying leadership in an unpredictable and unstable environment. The research questions are also clearly stated. Concerning them, I would welcome more analytical and less descriptive research questions. For example, a comparison of the perception of executive managers on leadership development and the differences according to various circumstances (e.g. type of industry and services rural/urban, national/international).

The dissertation is easy to read and well structured. I like the insight into the history of the development of leadership theories ending with the definition the author wants to use in his work. The author introduces the particular theories of leadership and shows how they have evolved and how other authors have added to them.

In section 1.3, the clear line of discussion of the theories gets a little bit lost. The text then becomes a list of further research by different authors, and it seems to be more as a presentation of what the author read (literature-driven rather than topic-driven). A similar situation appears in section 2.2, especially tables 9 and 10 underline this issue – why does always only one article introduces each topic? I would guess that if a topic is interesting for researchers, more of them would write about it. On the other side, I enjoyed and appreciated the intense work the author had to do when reading all of that scientific outputs.

## **Research methodology and data**

Qualitative research is a commonly used approach in social sciences, and it is appropriate for the research done in the dissertation. The first two parts of the section (3.1.1.-3.1.2.) are quite descriptive (it seems to be another literature review). I would recommend relating them more to the research's specific purpose and clearly defining what procedures are chosen and why. There is information about a specific narrative method (page 86), but information about advantages for this particular research is missing.

Even if the qualitative methodology is applied, I would welcome more information about the representativeness and relevance of the sample. It seems that all interviewed companies had to be listed in the Business Information Databases and the Superbrands (pages 96-97) and from Israel (page 97). Still, it is not clear how many such companies exist and if the number 16 represents the whole population. Not when the author mentions that hundreds of MNCs entered the region (page 111). What is the rationale for this number? On page 98, the author cites the studies of Kaminsky et al. (2012) and Foltaet al. (2012) that used 14 and 16 interviewees. Were these studies an inspiration for interviewing 16 interviewees?

In the research limitations (section 3.1.6), the author mentions that FMCP MNCs were interviewed, but High Tech MNCs were not. The High Tech sector is fast developing, and thus it requires more leadership than other sectors. What was the rationale for not interviewing companies from this sector?

## **Results**

The author mentions the various factors systematically and supports his research with references to interviews. It is also evident that the author addressed all aspects of leadership development in the interviews, which he defined theoretically in the previous chapters.

However, the reader cannot tell from this style whether these are aspects relating to the whole sample of MNCs or just those directly cited. I can understand that clustering companies into certain groups could lead to isomorphism and, as a result, a loss of competitive advantage as leaders would be available in the market from other companies. However, some numerical refinement would give a clearer picture of the outcome. The vagueness of the presentation and the prevalence of a phenomenon can be documented by how oft the sentences start with "Most of the executive managers...", "Some of the executive managers...", "Several executive managers...".

**Questions:**

- How do you explain that four out of the nine MNCs do not connect to categories *Connecting, Optimizing, and Discovering* (page 188)? What does it mean for your conclusions?
- How are the results applicable in other countries? There are international companies in the dataset. Thus, it is expected that their practices have global elements in them.

Dr. Oto Potluka

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dr. Potluka". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Basel, 25th of March, 2022