REVIEW

By **Prof. Todorka Ignatova Kostadinova, PhD**, Professor in Professional Field 3.7 "Administration and Management" at the Faculty of Public Health, Director of Accreditation, Quality and Project Activities at Medical University of Varna, 55 Marin Drinov Street, Varna 9002, tel. +359 52 677 089, mobile +359 889 588 408, e-mail: kostadinova@mu-varna.bg

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Member of the Scientific Jury pursuant to Order No. 600 / 29 September 2026 of the Rector of Varna Free University "Chernorizets Hrabar".

Regarding: The competition for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in Professional Field 3.7 Administration and Management, specialty "Organization and Management Outside the Sphere of Material Production".

Author of the dissertation: Amjad Mustafa Amara

Title of the dissertation: "Components of Emotional Intelligence (EI) as a Means of Strengthening Human Resources in Healthcare Institutions"

I. Biographical Information about the Candidate

Amjad Mustafa Amara is a specialist in business management, strategic human resource management and education. Between 1996 and 1999, he obtained a bachelor's degree in Business Management and Insurance in Israel, and between 1999 and 2001 he completed a master's degree in Business Management and Marketing at the University of Manchester, United Kingdom. Between 2010 and 2012, he obtained a bachelor's degree in Business Management and Education, together with a teaching qualification, at WIZO College in Haifa. Between 2012 and 2014, he completed a master's degree in Business Management, specializing in Strategic Human Resource Management, at the University of Haifa.

Since 2006, he has worked as a business management teacher and department head at Gernata High School in Kafr Kanna, Israel. From 2014 to 2018, he taught at various educational institutions, including Atid College and Al-Quds Open University. Since 2001, he has held the position of Deputy Administrative Director at Gernata College for Educational Advancement, and since 2000 he has managed an insurance agency.

In 2023, he began his doctoral studies at Varna Free University "Chernorizets Hrabar", with a research topic focusing on the components of emotional intelligence as a means of strengthening human resources in healthcare institutions in Israel. During 2023–2026, he participated in international academic forums and published scholarly works related to emotional intelligence, strategic human resource management and the resilience of healthcare organizations. In 2024, he obtained a qualification as a specialist in resilience based on emotional intelligence.

Arabic is his native language; he has excellent command of Hebrew and a good command of English.

II. General Characteristics and Relevance of the Dissertation Topic

The dissertation comprises 151 pages, structured as follows: an introduction, the main text in three chapters, a conclusion, a bibliography and appendices. The study addresses a current issue in human resource management, namely the role of emotional intelligence in overcoming professional burnout, retaining staff and strengthening the resilience of healthcare organizations during prolonged crises.

The relevance of the research is determined by the growing importance of the human factor for the effective functioning of healthcare institutions, particularly in situations involving staff shortages, high professional workloads and crises. In this context, examining the possibilities for integrating emotional intelligence into human resource management practices has both theoretical and practical significance.

The object of the study is related to organizational and management processes in healthcare institutions and human resource management under conditions of prolonged crises. It is consistent with the overall focus of the dissertation and provides a basis for analyzing individual and organizational factors affecting staff resilience.

The subject encompasses the relationships between human resource management practices, the components of emotional intelligence and professional burnout. The thematic scope is logically connected to the aim of the study, although it could have been delineated more precisely by focusing on the healthcare institutions examined in Israel and the period from the COVID-19 pandemic to the "Iron Swords" war.

The aim is to investigate the role of the components of emotional intelligence in strengthening human resources in healthcare institutions. It is relevant and consistent with the subject matter of the dissertation, although it could be formulated more briefly and specifically, with a clearer distinction between the expected final outcome and the individual research activities.

The research tasks follow a logical sequence—from clarifying the main theoretical concepts and analyzing the management context to conducting empirical research and formulating practical recommendations. Overall, they establish a link between the stated aim and the structure of the dissertation.

The author's thesis is logically related to the topic, object and subject of the research and is specified through a set of research hypotheses. Empirical testing of these hypotheses makes it possible to distinguish confirmed relationships from those for which sufficient evidence has not been obtained, which is important for an objective interpretation of the results.

Methodologically, the study combines a quantitative approach applied to 110 healthcare workers with a qualitative study involving representatives of management structures. The use of both approaches enables a more comprehensive examination of the research problem. It would be useful to explain in greater detail how the results of the quantitative study relate to the qualitative stage and how the two types of data were integrated when drawing the final conclusions.

The results help clarify the relationships between the individual components of emotional intelligence, human resource management practices and different dimensions of professional burnout. Not all research hypotheses receive empirical support, including the proposed mediating effect. This does not diminish the value of the study; rather, it highlights the need to distinguish precisely between established relationships and theoretically proposed mechanisms that have not been confirmed.

The bibliography includes 83 sources in English, a significant proportion of which were published in the last ten years. The literature used demonstrates a good knowledge of scholarly work on the topic and provides a theoretical foundation for the research.

III. Contributions of the Research to the Advancement of Scientific Knowledge

I accept the contributions to the dissertation as formulated by the doctoral candidate. They are structured into three main groups: scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions. They reflect the principal results of the research and aim to enrich scientific knowledge of the role of emotional intelligence in human resource management in healthcare, particularly under conditions of prolonged and successive crises.

Among the scientific contributions, the enrichment and specification of theoretical concepts concerning the integration of emotional intelligence into human resource management in healthcare institutions stand out. The study contributes to a deeper understanding of emotional competencies as

a potential protective factor in crisis environments and of their significance for staff resilience. Particularly important is the emphasis on the need for a differentiated approach to professional burnout depending on the nature of the crisis. The distinction between physical exhaustion characteristic of the pandemic period and psychological exhaustion associated with the wartime period raises the issue of tailoring organizational measures to the specific risks and needs of staff.

The scientific-applied contributions are associated with the development and validation of a comprehensive instrument for assessing the integration of emotional intelligence into the main stages of human resource management—recruitment, training, performance management and staff retention. The proposed methodological approach, which combines quantitative and qualitative methods for studying management practices, is also a contribution. It creates opportunities for a more in-depth interpretation of the results and for clarifying differences between declared policies and their actual implementation in the institutional environment.

The applied contributions consist of recommendations for improving human resource management and preventing professional burnout at different management levels. Emphasis is placed on the importance of organizational culture, the formalization of informal staff-retention practices, and the possibility of developing targeted measures at national level that take into account the characteristics of different types of institutions. The distinction between recommendations according to the degree of empirical support, as well as the consideration of the limitations of the research design when formulating prospective management decisions, should be viewed positively.

I consider the stated contributions to be consistent with the topic and aims of the dissertation and to present the principal research results from theoretical, methodological and practical-applied perspectives. They are relevant to the development of research in healthcare management and to further exploration of the possibilities for integrating emotional intelligence into human resource management policies and practices in crisis environments.

IV. Abstract and Publications Related to the Dissertation

The abstract presents the main propositions, structure, methodology and results of the dissertation clearly and consistently. It reflects the significant scientific and scientific-applied contributions of the research; its content corresponds to the dissertation and provides a good overview of the results achieved and their practical significance.

The doctoral candidate's publication activity is consistent with the topic of the dissertation. Three sole-authored publications and one co-authored publication with the academic supervisor have been submitted; the findings were discussed at international academic conferences. Based on the scientometric report provided, it can be concluded that the minimum national and applicable institutional requirements for the award of the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" have been met.

V. Established or Non-Established Plagiarism in the Dissertation and Abstract

On the basis of the similarity report, a review of the available scholarly literature, and a content analysis of the dissertation and abstract, no circumstances have been identified that would give grounds to doubt the author's academic integrity or to conclude that plagiarism is present.

VI. Critical Remarks, Questions and Recommendations

I have no serious critical remarks regarding the dissertation submitted by doctoral candidate Amjad Mustafa Amara. I recommend that, in any subsequent expanded continuation of the research, the contributions be presented even more clearly by distinguishing established empirical results from their scientific interpretation and practical applications. This would broaden the scope for further research questions.

VII. Conclusion

Based on the substantive, structural and comprehensive assessment of the submitted dissertation, abstract and related publications, I give a positive evaluation and recommend that the respected members of the Scientific Jury award Amjad Mustafa Amara the educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in Higher Education Area 3: Social, Economic and Legal Sciences, Professional Field 3.7 "Administration and Management", specialty "Organization and Management Outside the Sphere of Material Production".

Date: 28 October 2026
Varna

Reviewer:
/Prof. T. Kostadinova, PhD/