



OPINION

on the submitted works for participation in a competition for the academic position of ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR in the professional field 3.5. Public Communications and Information Sciences (Digital Communication of Business), announced by Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" in SJ, issue 35 from the 18th of April, 2023

Reviewer: Assoc. Prof. Diana Petkova, PhD

Candidate (s): Miroslava Krasimirova Tsenkova, PhD

- I. Evaluation of the scientific and practical results and contributions of the scientific and educational production submitted for participation in the competition

Dr. Miroslava Krasimirova Tsenkova is the only candidate in the competition. She has been a Chief Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" since 2012. Among the disciplines she has taught are "Corporate Online Reputation", "Creative Practices", "Communicative Aspects of Sales Promotion", "Digital Communication and Innovation" and others. Her dissertation, defended in 2010, is dedicated to the semiotic aspects of sales promotion communications. In the competition, Dr. Tsenkova has applied with two monographs, as well as with numerous other publications, such as papers, studies and reports in scientific journals and anthologies. During her teaching activity at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" she has supervised 102 graduates. In addition Dr. Tsenkova has also had practical experience as a specialist in marketing communications and advertising. The list of all her publications contains a total of 27 titles, and the ones selected for the competition, after the defense of her doctoral dissertation, are 23. Thus, the set of the scientific production presented by the candidate corresponds to the "Regulations on the terms and conditions for acquiring scientific degrees and occupying academic



positions at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski" and complies with the legal framework of the relevant normative acts.

Dr. Miroslava Tsenkova's monograph "Digital communication and PR tools in a business environment" is dedicated to an extremely relevant question for the modern business – the mass digitization and its consequences in business communication. The study systematizes the main theories of public communication, both the classical and the more recent ones. Among them are the models of Lasswell, Gerbner, Schramm, Jacobson, etc. It is emphasized that the new digital environment requires the rethinking and even reformulation of the classical communication models. In general, the mass digitalization requires transformations in communications and the selection of a new PR toolkit. In addition to rethinking the main theories of business communication, the monograph distinguishes between traditional and digital PR. All the advantages of the interactive communication in the digital space have been outlined, and some of them, according to Dr. Tsenkova, are: an individual approach to each client, generating a quick assessment and response to the users' inquiries, as well as emotional connectivity. In particular, the accent is put on the social platform Pinterest as a means of PR communication. The growing importance of blog marketing is also outlined and the advantages of different types of marketing are discussed.

The own empirical research, presented in the last, fourth chapter in the monograph, is a significant contribution. It verifies the validity of the main theoretical propositions presented in the previous chapters. The conceptual model and the methodology are correctly outlined, the main hypotheses are formulated. The obtained results not only create an idea of the main achievements and challenges of the marketing communications, but also outline some social and cultural characteristics specific of the Bulgarian business. For example, among its representatives there is a preference for using the social network Facebook, and this feature distinguishes it from the foreign businesses, where there is a much greater variety in the use of social networks. In conclusion, Dr. Tsenkova emphasizes that the use of PR tools in a digital environment is not just an alternative to the classic PR, but indicates the inevitable future development of the marketing communications related to technology.



These observations are further deepened in Dr. Tsenkova's monograph "Innovations in the Digital Communication of Business Organizations", where the competitiveness of organizations is placed in direct relationship with technological innovation. Among the main technologies under consideration are digital platforms, cloud technologies, chatbots, artificial intelligence and robotics. The third chapter is particularly useful, where specific case studies of successful innovations in the digital communication of Bulgarian business organizations are presented. The chapter studies 19 companies that have introduced technologies and innovations to improve communication with customers and partners, innovative digital marketing platforms, blockchain technologies, artificial intelligence, robotic process automation and visual simulation technologies. Based on the analysis of the newly introduced technological practices, Dr. Tsenkova reaches important conclusions about the business organizations in Bulgaria, namely that an increasing number of Bulgarian companies actively use the new information technologies. In such a way, the Bulgarian business demonstrates a high potential for development and competitiveness on a global level.

The two monographs are very well structured. They not only systematize and conceptualize the scientific theories in the field of digital business communications, but represent a particularly valuable contribution related to the in-depth knowledge of the Bulgarian business environment and the use of modern technologies in it to improve the public communication.

The other publications presented for the competition analyze the differences between traditional and digital PR technologies, the challenges for the media literacy in the new digital environment, the use of artificial intelligence as a marketing tool in business, the crisis PR communication of organizations in conditions of cyber threats, online reputation management, etc. These are all topics that complement the in-depth and detailed studies presented in the two monographs.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that the presented works have both scientific and practical contributions and outline important fields for the further research in the PR tools and technological innovations in digital business communication. The publications are not only up-to-date, but also demonstrate a



very good knowledge of the problems and challenges that the Bulgarian business faces. Thus, they acquire both theoretical and practical-applied value.

II. Notes and recommendations

I would recommend Dr. Tsenkova to continue working in her chosen scientific field. In the future, it would be especially useful to further investigate the interrelationship between the social and cultural business environment specific to Bulgaria and the application of new information technologies in it.

III. Conclusion

The candidate, Dr. Miroslava Krasimirova Tsenkova, meets all the formal requirements for the academic position of ASSISTANT PROFESSOR in professional field 3.5. Public Communications and Information Sciences (Digital Business Communication). She has also made significant scientific and practical contributions in her research. I will categorically vote positively for her being elected for the academic position she is applying to.

Date: 22.07.2023

Jury member:

/Assoc. Prof. Dr. Diana Petkova/