

OPINION

ON THE DISSERTATION WORK OF VALENTINA IVANOVA MARINOVA FOR THE
AWARD OF THE EDUCATIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC DEGREE "DOCTOR"

IN MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS - INTEGRATED MARKETING
COMMUNICATIONS

ON THE TOPIC: "MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS OF HEALTH INSTITUTIONS
FOR HOSPITAL MEDICAL CARE"

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE DISSERTATION AND AUTHOR'S ABSTRACT

The dissertation "MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS OF HEALTH INSTITUTIONS FOR HOSPITAL MEDICAL CARE" has a total volume of 229 pages, structured in a preface, four chapters, conclusions, sources used - 228 sources, of which 26 in Bulgarian and 187 in foreign languages, a reference to scientific contributions and a list of publications related to the topic of the dissertation. On the topic of the dissertation, Valentina Marinova has indicated her publications of five articles in scientific journals, collections and continuing editions with scientific review, one chapter of a collective monograph, a number of participations in scientific forums, thereby satisfying the requirements for communicating the results of scientific research for the PhD degree.

The abstract, attached to the defense documentation, is 12 pages long and presents the dissertation work through a description and analysis of: the relevance of the topic, the theoretical and practical need for the study,

the motivation for its choice. The object and subject of the study are outlined, the main scientific problem and the leading research thesis are formulated, as well as the verified hypotheses, goals, limitations, approach, methods, methodology, structure of the dissertation work, its contributions and generalizations.

The abstract is adequate to the dissertation, essentially reflects the structure, approach and main generalizations and meets the requirements for self-referencing of a dissertation work.

ASSESSMENT OF THE RELEVANCE OF THE PROBLEM

In the 21st century, the topic of public health communication is relevant and important, especially in light of the fierce competition in the sector, the challenges, crises and the need for qualitative and quantitative research on effective campaigns, approaches and practices of health organizations. In this sense, the identification of problems and finding solutions, the sustainability and competitiveness of brand management in healthcare require the creation and consistent application of certain communication models, techniques, approaches, and solutions.

Building public trust, strengthening relationships with patients and the social environment are key elements of digital marketing and communication management in this area. Therefore, research that offers a new perspective, analysis, and development strategies towards achieving sustainability and lasting competitive advantages in the sector are important for building consistent and strong communication internally and externally.

The dissertation work “Marketing Communications of Healthcare Institutions for Hospital Medical Care” is focused on marketing communications and their effectiveness on hospital medical institutions and

their organizations in Bulgaria, observed and analyzed through the “Internet activities” (p. 7) of healthcare institutions.

EVALUATION OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE DISSERTATION

The dissertation formulates specific research thesis and goals related to the scientific problem and the study of the marketing mix in healthcare; the legal basis of healthcare in Bulgaria; the theory and practice of marketing communications worldwide and practice in Bulgaria. To achieve the goals and tasks set, the doctoral student relies on a methodology that includes content analysis, semiotic and linguistic analysis, survey surveys.

In the first chapter of the dissertation “MARKETING MIX FOR HEALTH INSTITUTIONS. ANALYSIS OF THE SPECIFICITIES OF COMMUNICATIONS IN THE BULGARIAN HEALTH SYSTEM”, Valentina Marinova undertakes an important review of the problem from the point of view of its history, level of research, presentation in the sources, authors who have examined it. The main concepts are defined, through which the signs of the problem situation are described.

The analysis of the marketing mix in healthcare, its specifics and factors is a kind of starting point for the analysis of communication and PR practices of various types of healthcare institutions. This part demonstrates the research capabilities and skills for scientific interpretation on the topic of the dissertation based on certain accumulations and knowledge on the researched problem with its sides, connections, regularities.

The second chapter, titled “MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS”, is aimed at consistently presenting in the dissertation fundamental definitions, views and concepts that are key to the topic and object of the study. By considering public relations as a “management function” (p.51), focused on long-term models of communication between the organization and its publics, the

doctoral student brings out the main concepts and aspects of the object. In the main part, dedicated to public relations in healthcare, theories and factors are presented that are operational for the analysis in the empirical part and are essential for solving the problem situation.

In the third chapter "HOSPITAL COMMUNICATIONS IN THE INTERNET SPACE" Valentina Marinova emphasizes the practices, techniques, approaches and trends in the communication of medical services in a digital environment. Through Internet sites and social networks, the doctoral student explores the current situation of presenting specialized topics, for communication of services, for brand communication and building reputation.

A non-representative author's study was conducted among 125 participants, aiming to establish the features of the reception and sources of medical information among different demographic groups. Here I would like to note that the analysis of the results is cursory and insufficient.

The last chapter, fourth, of the dissertation "HOSPITAL ASSOCIATIONS IN BULGARIA - ESTABLISHMENT, DEVELOPMENT, ACTIVITIES AND COMMUNICATION PRACTICES" is aimed at studying the communication approaches and practices of hospital organizations in the country, looking at them through the specifics of management in the healthcare sector introduced in the first chapter. It is in this part that the main characteristics and approaches of health management and communication of healthcare institutions are outlined, especially in times of pandemic and social crises.

QUALITIES OF THE DISSERTATION THESIS

The development demonstrates the professional reflection of the doctoral student and her lasting interest in the research field to which she has dedicated herself.

The text is read with interest and ease, in places there is a pronounced narrative. The research tasks are precisely and specifically formulated, the scientific problem is stated in the preface, clear thesis and research tasks are formulated, the assumptions and questions made are investigated and proven in the chapters. The parts are logically and meaningfully connected.

The dissertation represents a certain contribution to the research area. The research and theses are original and authorial, the doctoral student has demonstrated levels of critical thinking and interpretation of the research problem.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- The object and subject of research are formulated inaccurately. The object of research is a certain area of communications, selected by the doctoral student on the basis of the analysis of the research problem, which is defined conceptually unified and logically complete. The subject of research, in turn, are those essential properties and relations of the object, the knowledge of which is particularly important for solving the theoretical or practical problem;
- The dissertation contains infographics that are not authorial, but for which the source is not indicated (e.g. p.161);
- The titles of the chapters and parts are formulated through a scientific problem, and not as in a book or textbook;
- After the chapters and parts, summaries and conclusions from the research follow;

- Instead of Sources Used (in dissertations they are presented on a footnote), part of the scientific-methodological layer of each dissertation is the Bibliography.

QUESTIONS:

- What is the role of the photos in the first chapter of the dissertation in proving the author's theses?

CONCLUSION:

The present dissertation work has a certain contribution to research in public communications and information sciences, in public communication and PR.

I accept the author's assessment of the practical significance of the study, related to the conclusions and summaries of the principles of work of PR experts in healthcare in a digital environment and the targeting of messages to different demographic groups.

The above-mentioned contributing points of the study give me grounds to support before the esteemed members of the scientific jury the awarding of the educational and scientific degree "doctor" in Media and Communications - Integrated Marketing Communications to VALENTINA IVANOVA MARINOVA for her dissertation on the topic: "MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS OF HEALTH INSTITUTIONS FOR HOSPITAL MEDICAL CARE".

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Prof. Dr. Vesselina Valkanova