

## OPINION

**By:** Assoc. Prof. Dinka Zlateva, PhD, Department "Management and Marketing", South-West University "Neofit Rilski" – Blagoevgrad

**Subject:** a dissertation paper for the award of educational and scientific degree "Doctor" in higher education area "Organization and management beyond the sphere of material production (Public Administration)"

**Grounds** for the submission of the opinion: appointment for a member of the scientific jury for defence of the dissertation paper according to Order No 239/ 8.03.2023 of the Rector of D. A. Tsenov Academy of Economics – Svishtov

**Author of the dissertation paper:** Magdalena Slave Andonovska

**Title of the dissertation paper:** Media communications management for formation of public opinion in the Republic of North Macedonia

**Scientific Advisors:** Prof. Lalka Borisova, PhD and Assoc. Prof. Mihail Chipriyanov, PhD

### I. General characteristics of the dissertation paper

The dissertation has a total volume of 240 pages. *Structurally*, it is composed of a list of abbreviations, an introduction, three chapters, a conclusion, a bibliography, and appendices. It contains 22 figures and 47 tables. The list of literary sources includes 117 titles, most of which are in Latin alphabet - 71 sources, and the rest - in Cyrillic. Good knowledge of the matter concerning the issues related to the management of communications with the media in the formation of public opinion makes an impression, as the necessary normative acts regulating these relationships are also presented. The volume of the dissertation work is sufficient to present the theoretical, methodological, and applied issues related to the management of communications with the media, which provides an opportunity for a good systematization, supported by knowledge in the relevant field, and the doctoral student has applied appropriate means of scientific knowledge to prove the claims made in the dissertation.

*The object* of the dissertation is the media in the Republic of North Macedonia, and *the subject* of the research is the management of communications with the media for the formation of public opinion in the Republic of North Macedonia. *The research thesis* defended by the doctoral student is that "the institutionally supported and scientifically based management of the media and media communications is a key condition for the formation of public opinion, for the credibility and truth of media publications in the Republic of North Macedonia, and supported by a strategic approach becomes a factor of stability in future



accession and full integration into the European Union". The aim of the dissertation is to determine the aspects of information modeling and the impact of overall media communication on public opinion, and how it affects individual citizens.

*In terms of content*, the dissertation represents a conceptual framework of communications with the media in the context of public opinion formation. In the first chapter of the dissertation, the doctoral student clarifies the role of media communications for the development of society, emphasizing public relations as an integral part of the media and evaluating their importance for building the democratic capacity of the state. A place is also given to the determinants of the media, with special attention given to the standards of work of the media in the Republic of North Macedonia, with the introduced principles and reference documents for the defense of freedom of expression. The second chapter explains the management of the media in the Republic of North Macedonia, as the chapter is devoted to its organization and management and the existing organizations that regulate the management of media communications. For this purpose, the specific characteristics of the business management of media organizations and the creation of value in their work have been assessed, and the main models for creating value have been presented. The third chapter presents the results of the conducted empirical research on the influence of media communications in forming public opinion in the Republic of North Macedonia. A good graphical visualization of the obtained results is presented, with the necessary analytical estimates. A strong emphasis is placed on the important guidelines for achieving successful media communications. The presented strategic initiatives through a proposed new concept for the development of media communications in the Republic of North Macedonia make an impression. It is a positive point that each chapter ends with a synthesized summary in which the main conclusions are presented.

*The appendices*, 12 in number, present information about: 1) the activities and functions of the institutions regulating media communications in the Republic of North Macedonia; 2) the survey prepared and distributed among 40 media in the Republic of North Macedonia, which supports the research insights of the doctoral student and 3) the results of the conducted empirical research through the survey method, obtained when processing data with the SPSS software product.

## **II. Assessment of the format and the contents of the dissertation**

*The topicality* of the dissertation work is indisputable, since it deals with issues that have been, and will be in the future, more and more seriously applied in the theory and practice of managing communications with the media.



The PhD student uses an appropriate *style* of expression for this type of research and demonstrates an enviable command of scientific terminology. The *research methods* used are system-differentiating and system-integrating, descriptive, comparative, inductive and deductive, heuristic methods. An analysis of secondary data of existing studies on the subject was carried out. The in-depth interview method was applied to the research of the media regulatory bodies, and the survey method was used in the empirical research of the media.

The presented *abstract* fully corresponds to the content of the dissertation work. The publication reference indicates that the doctoral student has 4 publications, which covers and exceeds the national minimum requirements under the Regulations for the Implementation of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria. She is the sole author of one research study and one paper, and a co-author of two papers, one of which is published in a journal indexed in Scopus.

### **III. Scientific and applied contribution of the dissertation paper**

Acquaintance with the dissertation gives grounds to conclude that the purpose of the research has been achieved, and the resulting tasks have received adequate and well-argued solutions. On this basis, I accept the scientific and scientific-applied *contributions* formulated by the doctoral student, which are presented in the following order:

1) Good practices in the field of media in the Republic of North Macedonia were evaluated through a benchmarking study, both in general and in particular on the various aspects of their functioning, regulation and management.

2) An empirical study was conducted with a clear and well-grounded methodology and a logical connection with the goals and tasks of the dissertation work. The outlined picture of the media environment is critically analyzed taking into account the objective circumstances related to media regulation in the Republic of North Macedonia, which to a large extent predetermines the deployment unleashing of the potential for the development of media communications and the development of a free competitive media market.

3) A Concept is proposed for the development of media communications in the Republic of North Macedonia with defined priorities, specific goals, target groups (direct and indirect) and measures for their inclusion, as well as targeted activities to achieve the goals, is proposed.

The main contributions are correctly formulated and accurately reveal the results achieved in the dissertation work. Considering the balance between the author's contributions and their applicability, I believe they have a high degree of scientific and applied significance.

#### IV. Questions and recommendations

The dissertation is a completed academic product, possessing scientific and scientific-applied contributions. It is distinguished by the consistency and logical connection of the individual parts, with the parallel construction of a compositional whole. Conclusions are adequately presented for each separate part, and the summaries in the final part describe the overall contribution of the doctoral student to the research.

With the clear conviction of the quality of the proposed dissertation work, I will allow myself to make some **recommendations** to the doctoral student:

- to make a more comprehensive popularization of the results of her research, as this will provide an opportunity for wide applicability of the proposed concept for the development of media communications.
- to expand her future research and focus her scientific interest on the influence of the digital environment and the process of convergence of technologies in the context of public opinion formation, which is also embedded in the proposed strategic initiatives of the doctoral student. This is still an under-researched area and a challenge for any industry, given the new information habits of modern man.

#### V. Summary assessment of the dissertation and conclusion

The dissertation contains scientific and scientific-applied results that represent an original contribution to science and meet the requirements of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB) and the Regulations for the Implementation of LDASRB.

The dissertation shows that the doctoral student has in-depth theoretical knowledge and demonstrates skills for independent research. Taking into account the merits of the dissertation work, I confidently state my **positive assessment** of the dissertation paper and **propose to the honorable scientific jury to award Magdalena Slave Andonovska an educational and scientific degree "Doctor"** in the field of higher education: 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, Professional field: 3.7. Administration and Management, doctoral program "Organization and management beyond the sphere of material production (Public Administration)".

Assoc. Prof. Dinka Zlateva

02.04.2023

Blagoevgrad