

OPINION

by Assoc. Prof. Olympia Yordanova Vedar, PhD
Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski", Faculty of Economics and Business Administration,
Department of Business Administration
Professional field 3.7. Administration and Management

Regarding: Dissertation for the award of PhD in the professional field 3.7. Administration and Management

Author of the dissertation: Rumyana Lyubomirova Antova

Topic: Communication policy and training in a digital environment (following the example of vocational high schools)

Grounds for submitting the Opinion: Participation in the scientific jury for the defense of the dissertation, according to Order No. 02/07.01.2025 of the Rector of the IBS

1. Information about the dissertation candidate

According to the submitted documents, Ms. Rumyana Antova was enrolled as a doctoral student in Self-preparation form of study at the IBS in October 2022. Her work experience is in the field of vocational training in vocational high schools, and her scientific interests are in the field of communications and training in a digital environment. I do not know her personally and have no direct impression of her work.

2. General characteristics of the presented dissertation work

The presented dissertation work provides grounds for drawing **the following conclusions:**

- 2.1. The chosen research problem is relevant, and the dissertation has a comprehensive nature, and the research thesis can be considered proven.
- 2.2. The topic is formulated clearly and specifically and corresponds to the chosen object and subject of the study.
- 2.3. The dissertation is well balanced, focused and purposeful. The scientific problems are clearly formulated, and the conclusions and proposals are well-founded. In terms of content and presentation, the dissertation fully meets the requirements for developing such a work.
- 2.4. The research logic and structure of the dissertation are well-established. A traditional approach has been applied in the structuring: theory - presentation of the results of empirical research - analysis, conclusions and guidelines for improving communication policies and communication itself in digital learning. It makes a very good impression and contributes to the quality of the text

that at the end of each chapter the conclusions from it are presented, briefly and systematized. Without taking it as a criticism, I believe that the text would have benefited if the presentation of the results and their analysis had been carried out in parallel, and not in two separate parts.

- 2.5. The dissertation contains certain practical and applied contributions in the field of communications in vocational high schools and in relation to their inevitable modification in the conditions of digital education. I positively evaluate the formulated working definitions of key concepts (including the attempt to introduce new terms – creative communication, digital hygiene, etc., although they are used without being defined in detail and convincingly), as well as the systematization of the types of communications in vocational high schools. I believe that the practical significance of the proposed methodologies for pedagogical communication in a digital environment is serious.

3. Evaluation of dissertation publications

Four publications are presented. One of them is a monograph prepared based on the dissertation work. The other three are reports published in conference proceedings (two independent and one co-authored). With these publications, Ms. Antova far exceeds the requirements, for which I congratulate her.

4. Assessment of the Abstract

The abstract correctly presents the content of the dissertation. I accept the contributions that Ms. Antova has defined, but with some reservations regarding the first one. I do not believe that dissertation work has significant scientific contributions. The practical and applied ones are indisputable.

5. Critical notes, recommendations and questions

I have no critical remarks on the substance of the text.

I would like to receive a little more information during the defense – which of the commented “things” is already a real fact and has been mass-introduced into training in vocational high schools (I emphasize – **mass-introduced** – and not as separate, but still isolated, “good practices”).

6. Conclusion

My conclusion is that the presented dissertation is a comprehensive, conscientious scientific study in a relevant and significant field and contains valuable practical contributions.

The PhD candidate is sufficiently familiar with the main literature on the topic, demonstrates serious knowledge and practical experience in the specific research area, can clearly formulate research problems, analyze, systematize and make sense of theories and concepts, construct a research apparatus, conduct empirical research, and draw reasoned conclusions.

I have reason to believe that the dissertation **fully complies with the requirements** of the Law on the Development of the Academic Staff of the Republic of Bulgaria and the Regulations for its application in the International Business School, therefore I give my positive opinion and propose to the esteemed jury to vote **“YES” the awarding of PhD to Ms. Romyana Lyubomirova Antova.**

27.01.2025

Sofia

Assoc. Prof. Olympia Vedar, PhD