

OPINION

by Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nadezhda Yordanova Dimova, New Bulgarian University

on the materials submitted for participation in the competition

for the academic position of "Associate Professor"

at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski"

in: field of higher education 3.Social, economic and legal sciences

professional field 3.8.Economics (Marketing - Product Innovations)

In the competition for "Associate Professor", announced in the State Gazette, issue 98 of 19.11.2024. and on the website of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" for the needs of the Department of "Marketing and IME" at the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences, with the candidate being Senior Assistant Professor **Katerina Yordanova Kozludzhova** from Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" (PU)

1. General presentation of the procedure and the candidate(s)

By order No. PD-22-71 of 17.01.2025 of the Rector of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" (PU), I have been appointed as a member of the scientific jury of a competition for the academic position of "associate professor" at PU in the field of higher education 3.Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.8.Economics (Marketing - Product Innovations), announced for the needs of the Department of "Marketing and IME" at the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences.

Only one candidate has submitted documents for participation in the announced competition: Senior Assistant Professor **Katerina Yordanova Kozludzhova** from Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski" (PU).

The set of materials on paper submitted by Senior Assistant Professor Katerina Yordanova Kozludzhova is in accordance with the Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff of PU, and includes the following documents:

- CV;
- Copy of diplomas;
- List of scientific works;
- List of citations;
- Documents of academic work;
- Documents of scientific research work;
- Other documents related to the competition.

For participation in the competition for the academic position of “associate professor” in the scientific specialty “Marketing – Product Innovations”, the candidate, Senior Assistant Professor, PhD Katerina Yordanova Kozludzhova, presents 8 scientific publications (4 studies and 4 articles), 1 monographic work, 1 textbook and 1 book based on a defended dissertation.

Five of the presented scientific publications are indexed in the world databases of scientific information Scopus and Web of science (4 of them with quartile Q4 and 1 – with quartile Q2). The remaining three scientific publications are indexed in other world databases of scientific information (OAJI, SJI Factor, Open Access Library, DOAJ, Crossref, Semantic Scholar, BASE, Digital object identifier, SCIMAGO, ROAD, Mendeley, Google Scholar, etc.). The published textbook "Innovations in Business" serves the course "Innovations in Business" for students in the Bachelor's Degree Program.

2. Brief biographical data (of the candidate/s)

The candidate, Senior Assistant Professor Katerina Yordanova Kozludzhova, graduated from the Ivan Vazov Language High School in Plovdiv with English, after which she graduated from the International College - Albena University (currently the University of Management) and the Hoge Hotelschool Maastricht, Netherlands, after which in 2016. became a doctoral student at the Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski" (PU) and defended her dissertation on the topic: "Market implementation of innovations in the software industry".

Her main research interests are in the following areas: Product innovations, Innovations triggered by changes in customer needs, Understanding and defining customer needs for developing innovations, Implementation of the innovative product, Model for market implementation of the innovation.

The candidate undoubtedly has sufficient teaching, scientific and professional experience in connection with the announced competition and all the materials provided testify to this.

3. Personal impressions

I do not know the candidate personally, but from the materials presented it can be concluded that Senior Assistant Professor Katerina Yordanova Kozludzhova has an excellent education, appropriate extensive experience both in practice and as a lecturer at Plovdiv University "Paisiy Hilendarski" (PU). The overall presentation of the documents speaks of an erudite researcher who is able to use critical analysis to derive important scientific statements and appropriate generalizations in the field of marketing and in particular product innovations.

4. General characteristics of the candidate's activities

Regarding the candidate's teaching and teaching activities, the following aspects can be emphasized:

- *Representative of the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences at the meeting of the International Doctoral Cooperation Network (CEESEENET), Krakow. Generating interest and involving students in scientific and educational forums.

- *Moderator of scientific sections at conferences.

- *Mentoring students at National Marketing Olympiads.

- *Conducting consultations and preparing students for participation in Marketing Olympiads.

- *Organization, guidance of students of the "Marketing" specialty and participation in the "Fair of Educational and Training Companies". Attracting business organizations for joint activities and collaborations.

In terms of the assessment of the candidate's scientific and scientific-applied activities, it can be concluded that all applied scientific works are focused on the study of product innovations in business, defining their content, revealing the challenges facing the implementation of the innovation process and developing new models for successful product innovations.

In the most general context, the presented scientific publications have a specific focus on the study of theoretical and empirical knowledge in the field of product innovations, revealing

the main problems facing their development and demand, and offering comprehensive models for the implementation of successful product innovations.

In essence, they consider the innovation process in two parts: development of the innovative product and implementation of the innovative product and its transformation into a product innovation. This approach allows for a comprehensive coverage of the innovation process of creating a product innovation, which makes it possible to study in depth the

the innovation process, registering key challenges and finding answers to important questions regarding the development of successful product innovations.

The main goal of the monographic work is clearly highlighted, which is to develop and present an integrated model for successful product innovations. Existing models with a focus on the development of product innovations prove to be unable to cover all the success indicators defined by modern business organizations. The main task of the candidate in the competition is to validate theoretical knowledge by conducting empirical research and to discover hybrid opportunities for the development of an integrated model of the innovation process, which will be adaptable to the rapidly changing environment and unpredictability in market demand and customer requirements.

I fully accept the results achieved from the monographic work:

1. Derivation of basic theoretical constructs for the study of product innovations.
2. Development of a conceptual model for the study of product innovations.
3. Carrying out empirical verification and validation of theoretical knowledge through the defined research hypotheses.
4. Outlining directions for future research in the field of product innovation.
5. Carrying out a comparative analysis of existing models for the development of product innovations, against the author's registered indicators of product innovation success.
6. Deriving key components of a model for successful product innovations.
7. Proposing additional criteria for assessing the company's profitable opportunities for the development of successful product innovations.
8. An integrated model of the innovation process for successful product innovations has been developed, which can be adapted and applied in different industries.

I confirm my positive opinion on the proposal for contributions to all of the candidate's scientific works, but I believe that they are a bit fragmented and could be unified.

I admire the innovativeness in the formulation that the main contribution concerns stimulating the innovation activity of business organizations and encouraging the development of successful innovations.

5. Assessment of the personal contribution of the candidate(s)

Regarding the personal contribution of the candidate from the submitted publications, I believe that the submitted ones categorically show that the candidate, Senior Assistant Professor Katerina Yordanova Kozludzhova, has clearly and categorically defined the contributions and the results obtained from her scientific and research activities and that they have actually been achieved.

6. Critical remarks and recommendations

I have no critical remarks, but I have a recommendation regarding the expansion of the candidate's research on product innovations in the conditions of digitalization and the implementation of AI, as well as the publication of the results of this research in publications in global databases.

CONCLUSION

The documents and materials submitted by Senior Assistant Professor **Katerina Yordanova Kozludzhova** meet all the requirements(s) of the Act on the Development of the Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (AADRB), the Regulations for the Implementation of the AADRB and the relevant Regulations of the Paisii Hilendarski University.

The candidate in the competition has presented a sufficient number of scientific works published after the materials used in the defense of the ONS "doctor". The candidate's works contain original scientific and applied contributions that have received international recognition, as a representative part of them have been published in journals and scientific collections published by international academic publishing houses. His theoretical developments have practical applicability, as some of them are directly oriented towards academic work.

My opinion about the scientific and teaching qualifications of Senior Assistant Professor **Katerina Yordanova Kozludzhova** is categorically positive.

The results achieved by Senior Assistant Professor Katerina Yordanova Kozludzhova in educational and scientific research activities fully comply with the minimum national and additional requirements of the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences, adopted in connection with the Regulations of the University of Sofia for the implementation of the ZRASRB.

After reviewing the materials and scientific papers presented in the competition, analyzing their significance and the scientific, scientifically-applied and applied contributions contained therein, I find it reasonable to give my positive assessment and recommend to the Scientific Jury to prepare a report-proposal to the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Economic and Social Sciences for the election of Senior Assistant Professor Dr. **Katerina Yordanova Kozludzhova** to the academic position of "Associate Professor" at the "Paisiy Hilendarski" University in: field of higher education 3. Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.8. Economics (Marketing - Product Innovations)

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Prepared the opinion:

Sofia

(Assoc. Prof. Dr. Nadezhda Dimova)