

STANDPOINT

From: Prof DSc Zhelyu Vladimirov, Sofia University St Kliment Ohridski, scientific field 3.7 "Administration and Management"

On: the scientific works of Ch. Assistant Professor Raya Nikolova Kanazireva, Ph.D., presented for participation in a competition for the academic position of "associate professor" in professional field 3.7. Administration and Management (Management; Entrepreneurship and Innovations; Brand Management - in Bulgarian and English), announced in State Gazette No. 96 of 17.11.2023

Reason for the standpoint: order of the Rector of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski" RD 38-673/21.12.2023

1. Brief introduction of the candidate

Raya Nikolova Kanazireva has a bachelor's degree in Business Administration (2001) from the American University in Bulgaria and a master's degree in Business Administration (2003) from the Sofia University (SU) "St. Kliment Ohridski", Faculty of Economics. In 2015, she defended her doctoral dissertation on the topic "Corporate entrepreneurship. Study of Bulgarian software companies" at SU "St. Kliment Ohridski", Faculty of Economics. In 2016, she started working as a senior assistant at the Faculty of Economics, Department of Business Administration. From 2016 to 2023, she leads lectures and seminar classes with a classroom workload of over 270 hours per year. The candidate delivers author's courses on Corporate Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Digital Brand Management, Management of the commons and Sustainable Business. Conducts seminars on Basics of Management in English, Entrepreneurship, Management and Development of Organizational Culture, National and Organizational Cultures. She participated in a number of national and international scientific forums. She speaks English and uses German.

2. General characteristics of the candidate's works

Dr Raya Kanazireva is an author of 25 scientific publications published in Bulgaria, Great Britain and Czechoslovakia, and she participated in the competition for associate professor with 14 of them. These publications include two independent monographs, one of which is based on a defended dissertation for the award of the PhD degree; two studies published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals; one article published in a journal indexed in Scopus; nine articles and reports published in non-refereed peer-reviewed journals or published in edited collective volumes, of which seven are self-authored and two are co-authored. Four of these publications are in English, and the remaining ten are in Bulgarian. The total volume of author's pages is 489, of which 32 pages are in English. The attached reference shows that the candidate has a total of 9 citations.

The publications submitted for participation in the competition do not repeat those for obtaining the PhD degree. With these papers, the candidate meets the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b of the Law on the development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria for professional field 3.7. "Administration and Management". As far as I am familiar with the research areas of PhD Raya Kanazireva, no plagiarism was detected in the publications submitted for the competition.

According to the attached reference, the applicant meets the minimum national requirements under Art. 2b of the Law on the development of the academic staff in the Republic of Bulgaria for scientific field Social, economic and legal sciences in the professional field 3.7 Administration and management.

3. Evaluation of the obtained scientific and scientific-applied results

The candidate's scientific publications can be grouped in the following thematic areas: (1) *Corporate entrepreneurship and innovations* (Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 15); (2) *Sustainable entrepreneurship and socially responsible investments* (Nos. 8, 9, 14); and (3) *Employee satisfaction, entrepreneurial values, entrepreneurship education* (Nos. 12, 13).

(1) *Corporate entrepreneurship and innovations* (Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 15)

Corporate entrepreneurship and innovations in public enterprises in Bulgaria is the subject of PhD Raya Kanazireva monograph from 2023 (No. 2). Since this is the habilitation thesis of the candidate, I will go into a little more detail. The book contains three chapters, a conclusion and 6 appendices in a volume of nearly 200 pages. The first chapter shows the differences between the manager and the entrepreneur, between corporate and individual entrepreneurship, as well as the manifestations of corporate entrepreneurship (CE). Special attention is paid to CE in the public sector from the point of view of the challenges and characteristics of the public entrepreneur. The second chapter presents the methodology of a qualitative study of CE among state-owned enterprises in Bulgaria. In the third chapter, the results of this research are given in the form of 6 case studies, which are the basis for significant generalizations. The incentives and obstacles to CE in state organizations are revealed, as well as the prospects for its development in this area. It is concluded that "an organization's entrepreneurial culture is often rooted in its foundational components. More specifically - the presence of a leader entrepreneur; management support; coordination of goals and strategies with the owner (representative of the state); clearly defined organizational goals. It is these factors that are the pillars supporting CE; they make possible (and rationalize) the paths to innovations" (p. 138). Overall, this is indeed a thorough work that adds new knowledge about the dimensions of entrepreneurship in the public sector.

In the book based on a defended dissertation work for awarding the PhD degree "Corporate entrepreneurship. A study of Bulgarian software companies" (No. 3) are investigated the levels of entrepreneurial intensity and the internal organizational climate for CE in established Bulgarian software companies, as well as the relationship between the factors of the organizational climate for CE and entrepreneurial intensity (EI). It was found that EI is at an average level, and climate factors for CE are also at an average level (average level of management support, average level of work autonomy and average level of rewards and incentives). Higher levels of these factors were identified in some subgroups of respondents by age and occupation. Other dependencies between the studied variables are also derived. A proposal is made to create a shared understanding ('common language') among employees about the processes that lead to the successful implementation of a CE strategy.

In fact, these two monographs summarize the results of a number of the author's previous studies. For example, publication No. 4 presents the results of a qualitative study of the nature of innovations and the barriers in Bulgarian state-owned enterprises. On this basis, the innovations' barriers in public enterprises specific to the Bulgarian context are summarized. Manifestations of CE in the form of new business ventures, innovations in processes, products and services, strategic renewal and organizational restructuring are the subject of analysis in publication No. 5. Other publications in this area reveal the influence of various internal and external factors on CE. For example, the influence of work autonomy on the level of innovation among Bulgarian software companies is analysed in publication No. 6; the importance of managerial support for the level of innovativeness and entrepreneurial intensity is brought out in publication No. 7; in article No. 10 the relationship between the level of entrepreneurial intensity and the internal organizational climate in Bulgarian software companies is outlined. In summary, the factors and models for CE

are presented in publication No. 15, where a new CE model is also proposed. In contrast to these publications, article No. 11 analysed CE as a strategy for gaining and maintaining competitive advantages, as well as for organizational change. Emphasis is on internal organizational factors influencing CE (such as strategy, structure, organizational control, human resources, and organizational culture).

(2) Sustainable entrepreneurship and socially responsible investments (Nos. 8, 9, 14)

Three publications are presented in the field of sustainable entrepreneurship and socially responsible investments. Article No. 8 reveals the relationship between the implementation of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and the stakeholder approach, as well as the degree of penetration of socially responsible investments into investors' portfolios. Specialized financial institutions have been identified as leading stakeholders in these investments. These issues are similar in the other two articles (Nos. 9 and 14). They analyse sustainable entrepreneurship, stakeholder theory, and the social and environmental effects of entrepreneurial innovation. The differences between ecological, social and sustainable entrepreneurship are shown. An author's model for sustainable entrepreneurship integrating stakeholder management is proposed.

(3) Employee satisfaction, entrepreneurial values, entrepreneurship education (Nos. 12, 13).

In two co-authored publications, the factors of employee satisfaction, entrepreneurial values and entrepreneurship education are investigated. Based on data from three empirical studies, publication No. 12 tested a model of employee job satisfaction as a function of satisfaction with key characteristics of the work environment. Due to the limited explanatory power of the model, an attempt has been made to improve it as a basis for future research. Entrepreneurship education in higher education is considered as a reflection of the characteristics of entrepreneurial work in publication No. 13. On this basis, a structure of possible educational content in entrepreneurship courses is proposed.

4. Significance of the contributions for science and practice

The review of the works presented for the competition of Raya Kanazireva, Ph.D., shows that these are author's studies that meet scientific standards in the social sciences. The candidate's contributions can be summarized as follows:

1. On the basis of an in-depth literature review, the main manifestations of CE, such as new business ventures, innovations, strategic renewal and organizational restructuring, are revealed.

2. Country-specific combinations of factors and manifestations of CE and innovations are identified, which adds new knowledge about these phenomena in public enterprises from different sectors in Bulgaria.

3. A model for auditing the CE in the Bulgarian socio-cultural environment is approved and its validity is proven. The main factors influencing corporate entrepreneurial intensity and innovations (such as management support, autonomy/freedom of action at work and rewards/incentives) are derived.

4. A logical connection is outlined between the way of applying corporate social responsibility and the stakeholder approach, as well as the degree of entry of socially responsible investments into investors' portfolios.

5. The obtained results can be used to in policies and strategies for the development of innovations and CE in public enterprises.

5. Critical notes, recommendations and questions

A critical note to the candidate concerns the multiple theoretical and practical contributions formulated. It is good to know that not every publication leads to such contributions, they are most often the result of a group of publications on a given issue.

The recommendation to the applicant is to publish more actively in journals indexed in the world databases, since so far there is only one publication in a journal indexed in such a database.

6. Conclusion

Regardless of these remarks, the evaluation of the publications presented by the candidate is highly positive. These works demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of issues related to CE and innovations in the public sector, corporate social responsibility and socially responsible investments, as well as entrepreneurship education. Raya Kanazireva, PhD has independently and in collaboration with other researchers conducted empirical studies that reveal high skills in collecting and processing data, summarizing results and drawing significant conclusions. The problems investigated, especially related to CE, are extremely relevant, as they could contribute to higher innovativeness of public enterprises. Interesting and important results have been obtained that add value to the existing knowledge. With these works presented in the competition and with her active scientific, managerial and teaching activity Raya Kanazireva, Ph.D., emerges as a serious and promising researcher.

All this gives me a reason to recommend to the respected scientific jury to award chief assistant professor, PhD. Raya Kanazireva, the position of "associate professor" in professional field 3.7. Administration and Management (Management; Entrepreneurship and Innovations; Brand Management - in Bulgarian and English) at the Faculty of Economics of Sofia University "St. Kliment Ohridski".

02.03.2024
Sofia

Reviewer:
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