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On the sense of introducing a new field of studies

The dynamics, level of development and complexity of modern media, as well as Polish academic researchers' long time involvement in this area call for the urgent need to formally classify this discipline, the science of **media and social communication**, as a new field of study. The name was suggested by renowned specialists in this field, professors Janusz Adamowski from Warsaw University and Tomasz Goban-Klas from Jagiellonian University, who earlier coined the phrase "journalism and social communication". Not surprisingly, there is still some discussion on the new name as there are some who wish to improve or alter it. It seems that at this stage of advanced work on the subject it is unnecessary to discuss issues which are really inexistent. Most experts are in agreement as to the need for the creation of this discipline. Names such as communicology, science of communication, media communication or journalism naturally fit in with the proposed onomastics.

Arguments

The arguments for the necessity of creation of a new field of study, media and social communication, as soon as possible:

1. **Proven research tradition.** For many years in Poland, other field experts (representatives) have been deciding to research media and social communication, or media studies in other words, instead of their own disciplines. They research various media areas such as history, language, values, research methods, journalist workshop, ethics, law, media influences, reception psychology or new communication techniques. Among them there are sociologists, philologists, political scientists, culture, film and art experts, psychologists, lawyers, theologians, historians and philosophers.

2. **Justified interdisciplinary nature.** Modern media, omnipresent in the communication sense and influencing people's social, political and cultural opinions, require specialist reflection, taking into consideration their complexity, incomparable to any other area of human activity. Research on media and social communication has attempted to understand this analytical complexity and to put some theoretical and practical order into

communication. It should be noted that no other field of study was able to encompass the diversity of the phenomena, hence the only solution was to combine and unite research methods from philology, sociology, psychology and political sciences. This is the only way to keep up with the media and social communication development and complexity. It is a tremendous challenge to traditional methods and habits, and only interdisciplinarity can meet and keep up with the speed, dynamics, complexity, level and unpredictability of research subject.

3. Media studies nature of work. There is no doubt that deciding whether a paper or research is of media character depends on how its subject and issues studied were worded. There can also be doubts regarding one's studies, being only marginally connected to media studies, such as history, psychology, philology or culture studies. The creation and formal classification of a new field would eliminate all this controversy. A competent and affirmed media experts circle would decide on the character of such work. This would also be advantageous to other disciplines, which are not always keen on accepting work of media nature as part of their field. In other words, these types of problems would automatically be solved.

4. Opportunity to recognize researchers as media and social communication experts. In this case, the fundamental criteria is regular publication on the subject of media and social communication, taking part in journalism and social communication sessions and formal recognition (in a diploma) of a defended post graduate or doctoral paper on the general subject of media communication. In ambiguous situations, media studies experts representing this new discipline would decide whether the work relates to media enough in order for it to be considered part of media studies, practical (related to journalist workshop) or theoretical.

5. Bachelor and master degree papers in the field of journalism and social communication. There are many universities and college with journalism and social communication institutes which do not provide their students opportunities to continue their studies beyond the master level. This is illogical and not in accordance with the Bologna system which, since 2003, is to offer three level (bachelor, master, doctoral) education to people. The creation of a new discipline would allow alumni of various fields to identify themselves and write their doctoral theses in the new field of study (media and social communication), formally accredited.

6. **Similarity of new name (media and social communication) to ones in other languages, ie. *media and communication studies***. The name of the new discipline allows for the possibility to easily translate into other languages without losing the meaning and sense.

Reflections and suggestions

It can be said that, although **informal but in fact existing discipline**, the science of media and social communication is dynamically developing in Poland. More and more people want to study journalism and social communication, not put off by high competition for work on the job market. These studies are more interesting, original, creative and inspiring than perceived later difficulties in finding work. A degree in this field does not limit one to work as a journalist but in any kind of profession dealing with communication such as press secretaries, public relations specialists, screenwriters, producers or even legal negotiators. Media and social communication as a discipline provides extraordinary opportunities to develop one's interests, to a degree incomparable to any other field of study. Aside from intellectual satisfaction, there is also emotional satisfaction and the need for constant initiative and the creation of various opinions and phenomena as well as programmes. And all that in order to perfect the skill of communication in every possible way and scope. The workshop and research perspectives make these studies both theoretical and practical. One can choose between a more academic or more practical approach, or can make the subject of research part of other disciplines such as medicine, trade or law, ie. resocialisation.

Specifying common methodology is in progress in this striving to be accredited discipline. This is the phenomenon of various media studies work. Once media and social communication is officially registered as a discipline, it will take some time until the interdisciplinary nature of this field becomes uniform and widely accepted. Once this discipline is accredited, the wide range of methods, advantageous in research on media issues and writing doctoral papers, will have a chance to enter a new phase of academic recognition. Without formal accreditation, this will not be possible, which means that methodology from other disciplines could only be applied. Even if they are excellent, for media and social communication it could mean stagnation in the long run.

It seems that the situation has developed enough for the authorities to see the present limitations and artificiality, and acknowledge the necessity for officially registering the new field of study to meet the dynamic development of the modern world. It would be cliché to state that necessary is the agreement, understanding and optimism of all those making

decisions in this case. If we are dealing with an obvious situation, there is no room for petty-mindedness, lack of vision or mounting difficulties. Research on media does not need obstacles but support from decision making authorities, in order to accredit this discipline so that it can develop and expand properly. **The research subject matter is too topical, omnipresent, timeless, progressive, unpredictable and imperative, related to man at the base of his historic being or, in other words, communication through language and image, for it to be ignored.**

The above remarks do not exhaust the discussion on the topic and are only an attempt to present the issue in order for it to be positively considered. The author is of the opinion that any support of the initiative, even if imperfect, is part of a greater whole and, in the end, is another reason for the making of the right decision.