

## **REVIEW**

by professor Dora Levterova – Gadjalova, DSc  
from the Plovdiv University “Paisii Hilendarski”  
of the materials submitted for participation in the competition  
for the academic position of “associated professor” at Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski”

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

professional field 3.2. Psychology (Special psychology)

In the competition for "associate professor", announced in the State Gazette, issue 40 from 14.05.2021 and in the website of Plovdiv University "Paisii Hilendarski" for the needs of the Department of Pedagogy and Management of Education at the Faculty of Pedagogy, as a candidate participates Ivan Vassilev Trichkov from PU "Paisii Hilendarski".

### **1. General presentation of the received materials**

By order № P33-3143 of 13.07.2021 of the Rector of the University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski" I was appointed a member of the scientific jury of a competition for the academic position "Associate Professor" at the University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski" in the field of higher education Social, economic and legal sciences, professional field 3.2 Psychology (Special psychology), announced for the needs of the Department of Pedagogy and Management of Education at the Faculty of Pedagogy.

Only a candidate has submitted documents for participation in the announced competition: Chief Assistant Professor Dr. Ivan Vassilev Trichkov from Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv.

The set of paper materials presented by Ivan Trichkov is in accordance with the Regulations for development of the academic staff of the University of Plovdiv, and includes the documents required by the Regulations of the University of Plovdiv.

The candidate PhD Ivan Trichkov has submitted a total of 30 scientific papers, 4 studies, 2 monographs, 1 book, 20 articles, 3 published chapters of textbooks and teaching aids and a list of participation in 9 national, educational and research projects. 27 scientific papers are accepted for review, which are outside the dissertation and are considered in the final evaluation of 3 textbooks and 3 research projects. The articles are full-text. Three studies are not reviewed due to the lack of co-authorship declarations by the co-authors, but this does not reflect the

general impression of the candidate's research activity. The distribution of scientific papers by relevant sections, in the country and abroad, is as follows 5 articles in a foreign language, respectively 3 in English and 2 in Russian, and 15 articles in Bulgarian.

The applicant has participated in 9 projects, of which 8 are Bulgarian and one international. Documents in the form of official notes are presented, reflecting the authenticity of the participation.

As noted above, three of the scientific studies submitted for review lack co-authorship declarations from other authors.

## **2. Brief biographical data of the candidate**

The candidate Ivan Trichkov graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Pedagogy in 2003 and a Master's degree in Counseling Psychology in 2006 at Plovdiv University. He has a professional qualification in Intercultural Education from SWU Blagoevgrad, specialization in "Criminalization, Socialization, Integration and Reintegration" from the Academy of Special Education - Warsaw since 2010. Since 2008 he has been a part-time assistant, since 2012 he has been a full-time assistant, and since 2013 he has been a chief assistant in special pedagogy at the Paisii Hilendarski University of Plovdiv. He speaks Russian and English.

He was a lecturer in the Erasmus program at Jan Kochanowski University, Kielce, Poland.

## **3. General characteristics of the candidate's activity**

For his participation in the competition, the candidate Dr. Ivan Trichkov presents the following implementation of the individual scientific-metric indicators.

<b>Indicator group</b>	<b>Minimum number of points for associated professor</b>	<b>Real number of points of the candidate</b>
A	50	50
B	-	-
C	100	100
G	200	405
D	50	70
E	-	-
<b>Total number of points</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>700</b>

It is evident that there is a total technical discrepancy in the column real number of points.

### *Assessment of educational and pedagogical activity and preparation of the candidate*

Ivan Trichkov, PhD has developed 3 chapters of textbooks and teaching aids. In the textbook "Psychology of children and students with special educational needs" and in the textbooks "Strategies and methods for working with children and students with special educational needs" and "Strategies and models for working with children and students with special educational needs" needs "each chapter has a designated author and the chapters

developed by the candidate are reviewed accordingly. The chapters developed by the candidate are full-text and are dedicated to children and students with special educational needs, diagnosis and differential diagnosis of atypical development, children and students with emotional and behavioral disorders, physical disabilities, multiple disabilities and strategies, methods and models for work with them.

The candidate has developed 4 lecture courses, which he teaches, respectively, in "Special Psychology", "Inclusive Education", "Psychodiagnostics", "Psychological interventions in working with children and students with emotional and behavioral disorders" and "Support in the training of children and students with emotional and behavioral disorders". He teaches 10 subjects in the Bachelor's degree and 2 in the Master's degree (as a keynote lecturer), including "Psychology of children and students with SEN", "Psychological interventions for children and students with emotional and behavioral disorders", "Neuropsychology", "Psychodiagnostics", "Classification systems ICD 10, DSM 5, ICDHI 2" with an annual classroom employment of 700 hours with a standard of 360 hours. In his teaching activity he systematically uses modern methods and technical means for teaching, using the latest achievements of information and communication technologies.

#### *Evaluation of the scientific and scientific-applied activity of the candidate*

The candidate's publications by relevance are: 2 monographs, 1 book on the dissertation, 4 studies in non-refereed journals with scientific editing or published in edited collective volumes, 3 articles in refereed and indexed in the world database with scientific information or two articles with impact factor, 20 articles in unrefereed journals with scientific editing or published in edited collective volumes. Of the articles, 2 have been published in journals: Special Pedagogy and the Trakia Journal of Science, and 18 articles are in collections. Of the four studios, one is independent and three are co-authors: two of them with one co-author and one studio with two co-authors. No declarations were submitted by the co-authors of the three studios for the works and contributions to the co-authorship of the three studios, therefore there are no circumstances for reviewing the studios and 30 points are taken from a group G of indicators.

#### *Contributions (scientific, scientific-applied, applied) and citations*

The habilitation paper "Psychological and pedagogical rules, models of good practices and recommendations for work and study in children and students with behavioral disorders" provides guidelines for effective pedagogical interactions between all members of the school and parent community. Aggression, hyperactivity and behavioral disorders are common in the school environment, and teachers and parents may not always respond in a timely and effective

manner. The interpretation of students' problematic behavior through the prism of aggression, hyperactivity, oppositional provocation disorder and other behavioral disorders, as well as the peculiarities of educational models to and in these cases increase the complexity of the problems discussed in the monograph. The monograph presents important and useful aspects of the diagnostic process for differentiating predictors, symptoms and behavioral patterns. Every pedagogical specialist and every parent can successfully use these aspects in their complex and difficult activity to achieve mental health and well-being of each student in the school and family context. The monograph provides clear and specific descriptions and guidelines for the work of teachers, psychologists and parents with problematic behaviors due to behavioral disorders of students. A great challenge is the choice of format and style of presentation of behavioral disorders of future and current pedagogical specialists as a theoretically and practically oriented methodological development. A challenge that the author successfully copes with by deriving basic specifics for each behavioral disorder and then rules and good practices, as well as recommendations in which anyone interested can find a way to interact with a specific event at school.

The monograph "Attitudes of teachers towards the inclusion of children and students with special educational needs in the social educational environment" presents the results of their own empirical research. The answer to the main question is sought: Is the attitude of pedagogical specialists towards children and students with special educational needs changing in the context of inclusive education and is there a social acceptance of people with disabilities in general. The study was conducted with two author's questionnaires as participants in the study are 145 general education teachers from Plovdiv and Plovdiv region. The monograph proves that social attitudes, prejudices and stereotypes not only accompany ontogenetic development, but also have a significant impact on social interactions between people with disabilities and normal people. These interactions are influenced by historical patterns of attitudes toward people with disabilities, social norms, socio-psychological barriers, some inflexible models, unrealistic expectations, and deliberate separation of the "different." Emphasis is placed on the fact that the social acceptance of people with disabilities is an important point in terms of their life functioning. The psychological aspects are specified: the content characteristics of stereotypes, prejudices and social attitudes, predispositions influencing the attitude towards people with disabilities, the existing norms and stigmas, attitudes and challenges to the integration and inclusive education of people with SEN, social acceptance and barriers to the integration of these individuals. The developed methodological systems in the monograph can be successfully used to track the attitude towards children with

disabilities and people with disabilities in general, their education and acceptance as equal and equal members of society.

The two monographs prove with new tools and original hypotheses essential scientific facts in already existing scientific and applied problems, and receive corroborating facts. The interpreted issues have prospects for additional research, research and analysis.

The published book on the basis of a defended dissertation for obtaining PhD, namely "Psychological aspects of the manifestation of empathy in children and students with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder" is structured with a pragmatic focus. Significant psychological and practical-applied spaces of empathy and empathy in attention deficit hyperactivity disorder are presented. The problem of empathy is extremely relevant, as almost every Bulgarian school educates children with hyperactivity. and this behavioral disorder is one of the most common in recent years. Trichkov skillfully interprets theoretical formulations and makes interesting and practical-applied analyzes of the results of the conducted empirical research.

The presented 3 refereed articles reveal interesting and important interpretations of social acceptance and social attitudes towards people with disabilities and the family support of children with behavioral and emotional disorders. The article on social acceptance is not reviewed because it overlaps with the content in the published book on the basis of a defended dissertation for "PhD". The article on family support for children with behavioral and emotional disorders introduces a theoretical analysis of the issue, which summarizes scientific research and offers a new look at existing issues. The article on empathy in children with hyperactivity syndrome, published in the Trakia Journal of Science, is actually in a peer-reviewed journal, although the candidate does not cite it as such. The article focuses on the development of empathy as one of the most important skills and abilities. Altruistic and empathetic behavior are effective tools for suppressing maladaptive behavior. The results of a scientific study to measure empathy and empathic behavior in children and students diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder are interpreted. The analyzes contribute to the understanding of the problem and contribute to the scientific-applied aspect. According to the redirection of the article from non-refereed journals to refereed journals, 10 points are deducted, but 30 points are added to indicator G.

The following areas of content presentation are outlined in the articles presented in unrefereed editions:

- emotional disorders; oppositional - provocative disorder,
- emotional well-being;
- empathy;

- emotional and mental well-being in students with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; self-acceptance and self-assessment
- personal identity, ethnic, national identity;
- social attitudes of the mass teacher towards the integration and inclusive education of students with special educational needs;
- problems of children and students with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder: social skills, empathy, socialization, therapeutic strategies, the role of the family in inclusion.
- training of students with special educational needs;
- the profession resource - teacher condition for the quality of integrated education;
- features of the integration of students with special educational needs;
- perspectives in the development of special education.

At first glance, the issues developed by the candidate seem diverse, and it is clear that the issues in the articles have a focus in two fields: psychological and pedagogical. Such a situation of scientific interests shows that the candidate PhD Ivan Trichkov tries to cover various aspects of psychological interpretations and psychological support of children and students with special educational needs. At the same time, this symbiosis of scientific research in psychological and pedagogical terms reflects perspective models for interdisciplinarity of science, and also brings a higher level of scientific applicability of the researched and interpreted issues.

The review study "Emotional disorders with onset, typical of childhood and adolescence" introduces analysis and focus on the nature, psychological characteristics, specifics and etiology of emotional disorders. This view is not descriptively self-serving, but acquires a practical dimension and application with an emphasis on therapeutic interventions and prognosis in interpreted disorders.

The candidate's contributions are in two planes: scientific and scientific-applied and are irrefutable, quite obvious and proven.

There are ten citations of the candidate in total. There are four citations of the candidate in monographs by other authors, citing one monograph and two articles. The citations in non-refereed scientific papers with peer review are 6, 4 of which are in articles of scientists working on the issue of children and students with special educational needs, and two citations are in reports of students at student scientific forums. As can be seen from the citations, the main importance of the citing authors is given to 9 articles and the monograph "Psychological aspects of the manifestation of empathy in children and students with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder" of the candidate. The citations are made by Bulgarian authors in the period 2017 - 2020 on the publication of the candidate from the period 2013 - 2019. The noted citations are

in essence and are in a positive and supportive plan of the interpreted problems and scientific ones of the citing authors.

Based on the refinement of the candidate's publications and citations, it can be concluded that he is recognizable among the scientific community.

#### **4. Assessment of the personal contribution of the candidate**

The personal contribution of the candidate Dr. Ivan Trichkov in the publications is indisputable, categorical and established, and the formulated contributions and results obtained are without a doubt his personal work and merit. As there are three unreviewed studies, redirection of an article from a non-referenced journal to a referenced journal, as well as a correct summation, the actual number of points of the candidate are accordingly reflected in the table below.

<b>Indicator group</b>	<b>Minimum number of points for associated professor</b>	<b>Real number of points of the candidate</b>
A	50	50
B	-	-
C	100	100
G	200	395
D	50	70
E	-	-
<b>Total number of points</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>615</b>

As can be seen, even in three unreviewed studies, the candidate Ch. Assistant Professor Ivan Trichkov PhD has almost 50% exceeded the required number of points to cover the requirements for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor".

#### **5. Critical remarks and recommendations**

I have recommended to the candidate Ivan Trichkov to expand his publishing activity in magazines and publications with impact factor, because the valuable results and interpretations in publications only in Bulgarian do not allow to obtain sufficient popularity of the developed and defended scientific theses and positions, as well as recognition among the foreign scientific community.

#### **6. Personal impressions**

The candidate have known PhD Ivan Trichkov since the period when he was a PhD student in Special Psychology. I was the scientific supervisor of his dissertation for PhD. I have reviewed his monographs and I can definitely say that his career and scientific growth and development in the first years follow the usual wanderings of a young researcher, but in the last four - five years there is a clear scientific orientation to the issue of emotional and behavioral

disorders. My impressions of him are positive. He is attentive, diligent, ambitious, with an inspired, socially intelligent and curious view of undiscovered spaces of psychological knowledge and science, and their practical application in educational institutions.

### **CONCLUSION**

The documents and materials submitted by Dr. Ivan Vassilev Trichkov meet all the requirements of the Law on the Development of Academic Staff in the Republic of Bulgaria (LDASRB), the Regulations for implementation of LDASRB and the relevant Rules of PU "Paisii Hilendarski".

The candidate in the competition has submitted a sufficient number of scientific papers published after the materials used in the defense of PhD. In the works of the candidate there are original scientific and applied contributions, which have received international recognition as a representative part of them are published in journals and scientific journals published by international academic publishers. His theoretical developments have practical applicability, as some of them are directly oriented to the educational work. The scientific and pre-teaching qualification of PhD Ivan Trichkov is undoubted.

The results achieved by PhD Ivan Vassilev Trichkov in the teaching and research activities fully comply with the specific requirements of the Faculty of Pedagogy, adopted in connection with the Regulations of the University of Plovdiv for the application of LDASRB.

After getting acquainted with the materials and scientific papers presented in the competition, analysis of their significance and contained in them scientific, scientific-applied and applied contributions, 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 Pedagogy for the election of PhD Ivan Vassilev Trichkov to the academic position of "Associate Professor" at the University of Plovdiv "Paisii Hilendarski" in professional field 3.2. Psychology (Special Psychology).

05.09.2021

Reviewer: .....

(prof. Dora Levterova – Gadjalova, DSc)