

## REVIEW

for a competition for holding the academic position of Associate Professor, by 1. Pedagogical sciences, Professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (*Innovations in education*), announced in issue 92 of the State Gazette of 18.11.2022, with candidate Head Assistant Zlatka Petkova Vakleva, PhD

Member of the scientific jury: Professor Galin Borisov Tsokov, PhD

### 1. General characteristics and professional biography of the candidate

The only candidate in the competition for the academic post of Associate Professor - Zlatka Petkova Vakleva was born in 1964. He graduated from the "Paisii Hilendarski" Polytechnic, majoring in Biology in 1992. Zlatka Vakleva successfully defended her doctoral dissertation in the field of teaching methodology in biology in 2003. In the period 1993-1994, she worked at PU "Paisiy Hilendarski" - Smolyan Branch as an assistant in teaching methodology in biology. In the following years until now, the candidate has held academic positions under employment law with the University of Plovdiv "Paisiy Hilendarski" in the Faculty of Biology - first as "Assistant Professor", and then as "Senior Assistant Professor" and "Head Assistant Professor". Currently, Vakleva is the Head Assistant Professor in biology teaching methodology in the department of "Botany and Biological Education" at the Faculty of Biology of the PU.

### 2. The research and scientific and applied activity of the candidate

In the announced competition, Vakleva applies with a total of 81 scientific publications, of which 2 monographs and 69 publications - scientific articles and materials from national and international conferences.

Evaluation of the type and quality of the presented scientific works on the subject of the competition

a/ Monographs

In accordance with the requirements of ZRNS, among the works presented is a monograph, playing the role of habilitation work. This is the publication *Vakleva, Zl. Innovations in education. Plovdiv, PU "Paisiy Hilendarski", published in 2022*. The book has a volume of 184 pages and is dedicated to one of the little developed (in

theoretical and theoretical-applied terms) areas in pedagogical science - innovations in education. In general, the monograph wins with its positive features and contributions, which can be summarized in the following main points:

- Significance and relevance of the problem developed in the work.
- Theoretically, a complex analysis of the various statements related to the main aspects of innovations in education was carried out.
- The main approaches for implementing innovations in an educational environment are analytically presented.
- Theoretical analyzes of innovation are supported by experimental research. They are in different areas: in the preparation of the students-future teachers trained in the Faculty of Biology and the Faculty of Pedagogy of PU "Paisiy Hilendarski", in increasing the qualification of the pedagogical staff in formal and informal educational process, in the biological preparation of the students.

From the list of Dr. Vakleva's publications, the second and monograph - *Vakleva, Z. Environmental education - a vision for the future, is impressive. Plovdiv, Makros, 2011.*

The monograph presents current theoretical models and technologies for implementing environmental education. The text examines important aspects of environmental education such as: history, content of basic concepts, an idea of contemporary trends internationally. Information on modern educational technologies such as project-based and situation-based learning has been systematized, with a detailed analysis of game methods, modeling, group and team organization of the educational process. In the monograph, special attention is paid to the system of pedagogical research models implemented in practice and illustrated with examples. A very strong part of the book is the developed variants of pedagogical technologies, using innovative methods and techniques for environmental education.

b/ Studies and articles in scientific-theoretical journals, scientific-methodical journals and anthologies

The main research highlights in these scientific works are:

- Study of conceptual emphases of critical thinking in the context of university education.;

- Education for sustainable development (ESD) as a priority direction in school practice in recent decades;
- Innovative presentation of environmental ethics as a trend in the education and research of students and doctoral students;
- Developed didactic technology for the formation of critical thinking skills - analysis of a case environmental situation and decision-making;
- Analysis of innovations in the context of environmental education;
- Use of innovative technologies to apply non-traditional learning methods - situational, game, project method and modeling.;
- Investigating the role of case studies in students' cognitive development;
- Innovative technologies for interdisciplinary environmental education.

In general, a very good evaluation can be given to the scientific and scientific-applied production presented by J. Vakleva in the field of didactics and innovations in education.

### **3. Assessment of academic and teaching activities of the candidate**

According to the submitted documents, the required study load is present. Vakleva's lectureship is related to lectures and seminars in the disciplines: *Competency approach and innovations in education; Health education; Environmental ethics; Pedagogical ethics; Communication skills Environmental education; Education for sustainable development*

The following facts testify to the high quality of Vakleva's teaching activities:

- Member of commissions for: state exams of OKS \_Master; accreditation of direction 1.3. Pedagogy of training in...; evaluation of candidates' papers from the biology exam.
- Course leader for students majoring in Biology and Chemistry and Biology and English Language;
- He is the head of two and a Participant in 10 educational and scientific projects / university and national/;
- Member of a number of international scientific organizations
- She participated in dozens of national and international scientific conferences;
- Academic supervisor of more than 10 graduates in OKS Master.

### **4. Basic scientific-theoretical and scientific-applied contributions**

The contributions of Head Assistant Professor Vakleva can be summarized as follows:

- The content of the competence-oriented educational process was designed, emphasizing: enrichment of the professional competence of the specialist teacher; formation of environmental competences and competences for sustainable development and a healthy lifestyle in the educational process of students, pupils and teachers;
- Current problems related to the topic of innovations in education are developed, as the theoretical summaries are supported by the research activity;
- The theoretical foundations of a new discipline, innovative in the field of environmental education - Environmental ethics - have been systematized. It provides enrichment of the professional competence of the specialist - teacher, biologist and ecologist;
- Operationalization of the goals of environmental education and their orientation towards universal human values;
- Variants of pedagogical technologies have been developed, using innovative methods and techniques for environmental education.

As support for this overall assessment of scientific contributions, we can point to the fact that Vakleva's works have been cited as significant and cited in a number of publications - monographs and articles in periodicals and scientific collections. The noted citations of the candidate's works are 94.

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

Some recommendations can be made to the research and teaching activities of Vakleva, PhD :

- In my opinion, Vakleva's scientific output contains enough originally developed ideas and achieved results that can be popularized through publications in indexed publications abroad;
- Doctor Vakleva to direct his research efforts even more focused towards the development of a specific and very current field in pedagogy, which is pedagogical innovation.

### **CONCLUSION**

The documents and materials submitted by Chief Assistant Professor Zlatka Vakleva, PhD meet all the requirements of the Academic Staff Development Act of Republic of Bulgaria (ASDARB), the Regulations for the implementation of ASDARB,

and the relevant Regulations of Plovdiv University. She has presented a sufficient number of high-quality scientific papers. In the works of the candidate there are original scientific and applied contributions that have received national recognition. The candidate in the competition fulfils the relevant minimum national requirements for holding the academic position of "Associate Professor". I have no doubt of plagiarism in the scientific publications submitted for review.

Based on the acquaintance with the presented scientific papers, their significance, the theoretical and scientific-applied contributions contained in them, I give my **positive assessment** and I find it reasonable to propose Zlatka Petkova Vakleva, PhD to take the academic position of "Associate Professor" in professional field 1.2. Pedagogy (*Innovations in Education*)

12.03.2023

Reviewer:

/prof. Galin Tsokov, PhD /